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THE TELEVISION MESSAGE AS SOCIAL OBJECT:

A comparative study of the structure and content of television programmes in Britain

Ph.D. Thesis.

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ABSTRACT

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THE TELEVISION MESSAGE AS SOCIAL OBJECT:

A comparative study of the structure and content of television programmes in Britain (excluding public affairs, children's television and shorts). The thesis will be both a theoretical and empirical examination of the applicability of the varieties of analysis of symbolic orders which have been advanced by such writers as Lévi-Strauss and Foucault.

The thesis is an exploration, through the study of the narrative structure of a series of television drama programmes, of the relationship between television, myths and folktales.

Following upon work done principally by Claude Lévi-Strauss and Vladimir Propp, but also others writing in the field of semiological and structural analysis, a detailed examination of the video-recorded texts of a thirteen part drama series is presented.

It is argued in the context of an examination of, respectively, television and language, television and the mythic, and of the nature of narrative, that the television drama preserves the forms which otherwise might be thought of as particular to oral culture and communication.

Television, in its preservation of these forms, and in its generally mythic character, gains its effectiveness thereby and must be understood sociologically in such terms. The effect of such an understanding, it is argued, will be to challenge any comprehension of the medium simply as the particular product of a particular historical period and/or an imposition in culture of one world view on an other.

The television message is both a collective product and a transhistorical one. It is argued that on both counts it needs to be understood as a genuine expression of a social need, though in its expression of that need it does not necessarily simply act to preserve existing social and cultural conditions.

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FOREWORD

There are a number of disparate points that I must make.

As far as the long title of the thesis is concerned, two things
will quickly become clear: firstly that the empirical analysis
is exclusively concerned with television drama - the comparative
work involves reference to a number of separate episodes of a
television drama series; and secondly, the theoretical framework,
while it owes much to a reading of Michel Foucault, nevertheless is
less specifically dependent on him than other so-called structuralist
writers.

Work done on and through the texts of Intimate Strangers was much
helped by the kind cooperation of London Weekend Television, who
produced and transmitted the programmes. They not only gave me
permission to video-record them, but they provided me with copies
of the scripts. Needless to say I am particularly grateful to them.

Finally I would like to point out that some of my reading of the
French texts discussed throughout this thesis was in translation;
I refer in the footnotes to the sources I have consulted in the
original and to those I have consulted in translation.

CHAPTER I

Television and Culture

Television is important. 94% of the population of the United Kingdom over the age of five has access to a television set. Each member of that population watches it an average of 16 hours and 27 minutes per week.[1] This much at least is certain and demonstrable. Less demonstrable, however, though equally certain, is that television is qualitatively important.

I aim in this thesis to explore some aspects of this qualitative dimension, and to do so through analysis of the television message, and, in particular, its narrative structure. I will be concerned with television as language and television as myth. I expect to show that television preserves forms of cultural experience that were previously thought of as being the peculiar prerogative of 'primitive' societies and that in so doing it anchors our experience, historical, changing, uncertain into another which is relatively unchanging and more certain. The way the television presents its texts is the key to the discussion.

The analysis of the television message and in particular its structural analysis is a relatively recent development. It is prompted by the inadequacy and inconsistency of many of the findings into the effects of television and correlatively the realisation that the study of effects cannot be undertaken in vacuo, that is in ignorance of the context, both social and cultural, of the supposed equation of message and action. And it is prompted by a recognition that television does not consist in a collection of isolated events to which individuals will react independently of what else is appearing on the screen. The significance

and meaning of its messages cannot simply be derived from a study of its

content.[2]

Similarly   the production of the programmes, the relationship of

the producing organisation to other institutions of society, while

clearly being viable objects of study, do not reach the central questions

surrounding the nature of television.[3]   These questions are, I suggest,

those that seek cultures significance in what Clifford Geertz calls

"the autonomous process of symbolic formulation"[4] in the recognition

that at the heart of any social process of communication lies a symbolic

system of cognitive, affective, and evaluative messages - rich, complex

and resilient.

What is it that television is saying?   How does it say it?   These seem

important and much neglected questions and they lead straight to an

analysis of the message of television and to the ways in which its

meanings are communicated.   Other questions of course can and should

be asked: for example, who is speaking, and to what effect?   Both

sets of questions are interdependent.   Both are necessary.   My choice

is therefore premised on the perception both of a lack and an inadequacy.

The lack consists in the relative paucity of any mature studies of the

content of television and the inadequacy in the arguments, false as I

hope to show, that television can only be understood in terms of the

specificity of bourgeois culture and ideology, and as such is either

distorting or transient or both.[5]

In order to begin there is a need for a notion of culture, and then of

myth and common sense.   Each, of course, poses something of a problem

and I can only sketch in this introduction what appear to be their

most significant aspects.

In anthropology the claim for culture's autonomy as an object of study is itself dependent on the recognition of man's distinctiveness as opposed to animal. It is a distinctiveness grounded in man's consciousness, his language and in his attempts to make sense of his world. The core of man's cultural activity lies in his capacity to generate meaning, to communicate, to transmit and to order those meanings; it lies in the creation of a specifically symbolic level of existence. Anthropologists have also argued, though with differing degrees of emphasis, that the culture of primitive societies, both the product and the condition of the relatively simple social structure with which it is associated, manifests a coherence which is systemic. Further, they suggest, that one measure at least of increasing social complexity is to be found in the increasing differentiation in cultural and social structure.[6]

The intellectual space occupied by culture in the analysis of primitive societies has been replaced by the concept of ideology in industrial societies. The boundaries are, of course, blurred. However the recognition of societies as historically conditioned, dynamic and changing has involved a rejection of the relatively autonomous, static and consensual notion of culture. This has been replaced by a stress on just those historical conditions, on social relations, on power and on the recognition that change and conflict are the new order of the day.[7] Needless to say primitive societies are neither static nor conflict free; but equally industrial societies are neither constantly changing nor entirely conflict ridden.[8] I would like to suggest that the notion of culture, so far only crudely drawn, has a place in the analysis of contemporary societies. I would also like to suggest that an important key to the understanding of culture can be found in the analysis of the mythic.

The mythic includes myth, folktale and ritual action and can be defined operationally; it mediates between a situation of pure nature, of no knowledge or understanding of the world and one in which, subsequently, that knowledge becomes more specialised, and becomes more scientific or more philosophical. Mythic space is defined by its competence to set and articulate the boundaries of what passes for conventional knowledge in primitive society and by its capacity to articulate differences and similarities in what amounts to a developing but always complete cultural map. I suggest that this relationship of pre-cultural (natural), mythic, and as it were post mythic, can be formally introduced into an analysis of contemporary culture and the resulting model allows the situation and function of television to be stated quite clearly.[9]

To do so involves the recognition that contemporary culture is highly differentiated;[10] much of it is inaccessible without mediation, to the majority of its members. In this situation the mythic does not define a particular stage in the transition from ignorance to knowledge, but a particular territory within which, simultaneously, the incompatibilities within contemporary culture are ameliorated. Within our society we are faced with different types of knowledge and experience which are both familiar and unfamiliar. The unfamiliar is of two kinds: the specialised and the nonsensical. The specialised consists in the particular forms of art, science and politics which we might call professional;[11] they are complex and esoteric and they are produced and maintained by specialist and more or less exclusive groups. The nonsensical consists in what is rejected by a culture, the mythical of earlier societies, but also the mythical,[12] the alien or the phoney, of other, contemporary societies, as well as the distortions, unacceptabilities and objects of fear that always bubble up beneath the crust of the safe and the acceptable.

Between these two forms of knowledge, the one super-cultural, the other pre- (or anti- or even non-) cultural, lies the world of the everyday and the modes of communication which articulate everyday concerns; formally and functionally identically placed to the mythic in primitive society. Here, then, is the domain of the mythic in contemporary society, a domain in which for most of the time most of us live, a domain where boundaries are constantly being defined and redefined. These boundaries are being defined and redefined both in relation to new developments in the particular forms of esoteric knowledge whose language, concept or aesthetic is of such complexity as to deny us access, and also in relation to the underworld of the threatening and incomprehensible, of that which we understand (or we think we do) but have rejected. In a technically advanced world this is the nature against which our integrity needs to be upheld; but this is the familiar, though often terrifying, nature and not the unfamiliar nature discussed and explored by science.

Television like myth occupies the middle ground and in so doing defines in its particular way the basic categories and content of the culture of the everyday world. It is an important part of the argument of this thesis that television, supremely among the other media of mass communication, is coherently, systematically and centrally at work in the articulation of culture and in the mediation of alien bodies of knowledge and experience. To understand the nature of this activity it is not enough to argue in terms of reflection or effects; one must begin with a theory which seeks to encompass the complexity of the cultural system, and a methodology which allows for the analysis of its individual texts.

At the heart of such a theory must be the notion of the commensense
world. "The everyday life world is the province of reality in which
man continuously participates in ways which are at once inevitable and
patterned."[13]. This Schutzian vision of the daily world, a world
dominated by the demands of practical rationality and by the recipes
of taken for granted knowledge is a fruitful one. Albeit difficult
to penetrate methodologically and perhaps theoretically impossible to
justify, it is relatively easy to describe. Social life is characterised,
and indeed is only possible because so much of what constitutes it can
be taken for granted, can be unthought; we deal in typicalities, we
make assumptions, predictions and choices in an 'all-things-being-equal'
frame of mind. The everyday world is marked by its repetitiveness,
its abstraction, its anonymity and the ever present possibility of
transcendence.[14] It is not a world of laws, nor even of probabilities,
but of hopes and fears and of more or less adequately informed choices,[15]
both programmed and unprogrammed. Our choices, our unconsciously
directed responses, are played against a backdrop of the typical and the
unproblematic. By definition, as it were, commonsense is that to
which no-one is excluded, nor is it transformed by an individual's
practice of it. "It is perhaps the essential characteristic of our
everyday lives that any problem which arises has as its tacit background
the unproblematic status of the mundane reality which commonsense men
share. However profound and far reaching the problem may be, it _is_
a problem over and against that which is taken for granted; the validity
of the world within which we come to inquire, no doubt to probe or to
reflect."[16]

The unpredictable and the uncertain both surround and pervade the
everyday world. They continually challenge the peace perhaps more
devoutly to be wished than real. The world we know is encompassed

by that which we don't; the world we know and the security of that

knowledge is constantly being pricked by the chance event, the encounter,

the intrusion of the new and the unfamiliar.   Our world, at least that

portion of it which we can take for granted is a kernel; we step out

of it at our peril, and because it is chaos (the unknown and the

unthought) which we fear most, we are constantly at work revising the

limits of what it is that we can take for granted, constantly incorporating

more and more within our own stock of knowledge.[17]   This is both, of

course, an individual and a social/cultural process, but the point is

that our knowledge of the world, the knowledge which guides our everyday

activities is bounded; there is an horizon to experience.

Horizons both define and limit, include and exclude; they are static

in that they are always there, but dynamic in that their content is

always changing.   Things both come into view and then disappear, a

disappearance the result of their incorporation into the familiar.

As C.D. Burns notes: "On the horizon are facts or aspects of facts

or events or situations - realities like any other in the fully

experienced world, but different from those in that, as it were, we

see them only from one side.   Horizon facts are those whose connections

with the fully experienced is clear enough, but not their connection

with what may still be experienced and is not yet."[18]

The everyday world of commonsense, then, has two horizons, the one of

the particular sciences and arts (with their own horizons of the new

and the unknown), the other of the general negations of what passes for

the true and the acceptable.   Where these three domains meet lie

regions of ambiguity and uncertainty; of a lack of clarity about

context and meaning, and a lack of clarity about the bases for choice,

for decisions and for the consequences of future actions.

Our responses to the ambiguous and the uncertain will be many. As individuals we can be tolerant or intolerant, anarchic or staid. But we only know and recognise these various corrosions of meaning because we already know, consciously but more often unconsciously, the system of symbolic coherences which are the essence of our culture. On the one hand there are the events of the real world, intrusions of history as it were, the speech (parole) of the everyday; on the other the security of a structure, the guarantee of communication, the language (langue) of the everyday;[19] actions and events, rules and structure, interdependent of course and constantly changing, but each of a different order. Indeed the commonsense world in its language and in its beliefs and actions is the privileged site where langue and parole meet. The everyday world is simultaneously a world of rule and transgression; but no knowledge of it is possible, just as it is itself impossible, without an understanding of those rules. Hence we are led to its structure, to the grounds of its possibility, and to the identification of the syntax and semantics of its meanings.

In this context, therefore, how are we to understand the cultural significance of television? It might be suggested that television is of the commonsense world but at the same time distinct from it. Of necessity involved in that world, it must equally of necessity manifest more clearly, though not necessarily directly, the structures underlying it. Then it might be suggested that television both speaks to and speaks of the modes of thought and feeling that orient our actions in the daily round. It is not so much a guide to action, or a guide for the perplexed, but rather a commentary, a more or less gentle mastication of the categories and boundaries of culture and an exploration of the ambiguities and uncertainties that are endemic to it. In order to understand how this might be it would seem essential to examine the

texts presented on television themselves, and to identify in what the

discourse of television consists.   In so far as television communicates

something to each of us, and to all of us, notwithstanding the individual's

processes of selection and interpretation which cannot for one moment

be denied,[20] the messages that television transmits are common.   Whether

this commonness is genuine or whether it is an imposed structure, an

ideological form, is for the moment beside the point.

The examination of the messages that are transmitted by television begins

with their structure, understood in terms of the patterns of meaning

which can be shown to exist within a series of texts and upon which the

specific meaning of a specific text is seen to depend.[21]   The problems

are immense, for clearly even a superficial consideration of the nature

of the televisual texts would be able to identify any number of different

levels of coding, or of structuring:[22]   those both specific to the medium

and dependent on its technical make-up and those more generally at work

within many media including face-to-face interaction.

Television is not one language but many.   It is however coordinated,

its various codes knitting together in a text which we, as viewers, can

read and to which we respond.   There are therefore a number of prelim-

inary observations which can be made about the nature of its communication.

The first refers to the relatively restricted nature of its codes.

No communication is without restriction;   the freedom that we have to

construct always new sentences in speech is largely illusory;[23]   even

in the most open of social contexts there are required forms of speech,

just as there are different conventions and limitations of expression

whether one chooses to write or to talk.   L.S. Vygotsky for example

notes some of these differences: "Communication in writing relies on

the formal meanings of words and requires a much greater number of words

than oral speech to convey the same idea. It is addressed to an absent
person who rarely has in mind the same subject as the writer. Therefore
it must be fully deployed; syntactic differentiation is at a maximum;
and expressions are used that would seem unnatural in conversation."[24]

In writing there are manifest differences between poetry and prose and
as Roman Jakobson points out language itself is multifaceted and multi-
functional; different emphases as between the emotive, the referential,
the poetic, the phatic, the metalingual, and the conative dimensions of
language generate different types of text, and conversely different
types of text demand different forms of stress.[25] In oral speech there
seem to be differences between what Basil Bernstein calls restricted and
elaborated codes.[26]

Television will be host to all or any of these many varieties of expression,
but television itself is a specific form of communication and imposes
its own structure, rhetorically, on that which it transmits. We are
familiar with what are popularly known as its formats; we recognise
beginnings and endings and patterns of presentation. Television speaks,
but it speaks anonymously and indiscriminately. Its messages are well
defined and abbreviated but ephemeral. Programmes begin and end but
broadcasting itself is endless.[27] Communication is relatively compact
and condensed. It is repetitive. Television indeed shares with film
a metalinguistic situation somewhere between the oral and the written, but
compared to film television is much closer to the oral form. It is
nearer the everyday world,[28] and its anonymity is ameliorated by the
relative directness of its communication and by the familiarity which
that engenders, a familiarity which video seems itself to engender.
The video image seems closer, more real, than the equivalent on film.

Television is, I suggest, a mode of communication with particular
characteristics. To be involved with it, as audience or as producer,
is to be involved more or less passively in a communicative context
which in its structuring alone limits what can be said and how. It
has in this sense much in common with other forms of ritual communication,
which in their denial or restriction of the right of free response, and
by their distance from the context of normal face-to-face communication,
exercise a subtle but nevertheless real form of cultural control. I
wish to suggest that the primary mechanism for this restriction in
television's communication is narrative, and that it is through a study
of this code, the rules according to which stories are told, both
fictional and non-fictional, that much will be learnt about the nature
of television as a whole.

W.B. Gallie in his discussion of narration in history writes of stories
in this way: "We follow a story across contingencies or accidents,
coincidences, unpredictable events of all kinds, yet the story's general
direction and continuous advance towards its final conclusion somehow
succeed in rendering these contingencies acceptable."[29] It is in
making the unacceptable acceptable, in clarifying ambiguity and
strengthening resistance to uncertainty that the television narrative
gains its significance. Generally the stories, from drama to news and
to documentary are told according to consistent not to say traditional
rules.[30] Rarely for television the bold experiments and advances of
modernism which were in part a precise and self-conscious challenge to
just those structures of story-telling which seemed so restrictive of
true creativity. Television story-telling is a craft. The texts
themselves, the programmes, are the result of collective and often
anonymous activity: producers, directors, cameramen, props, make-up
artists, scenery designers and builders, technicians of all kinds,

actors and writers, all together generate a coherent message. Within such an organisation pressures to conform, often interpreted in terms of giving the public what it wants, are rarely denied.

The telling of a story is a deceptively complex act. On the one hand it depends on the culture which provides it with its specific meaning through both content and context of performance.[31] On the other it depends on a specific set of rules, the formal structure of narrative itself. This itself can be meaningful,[32] not only because the abstract narrative code generates a statement of the kind "This is a story: understand it as such", but because the telling of a story - in a sense always once upon a time - is a social occasion of a particular sort.

But having said this we need to make a further distinction still, and that between the temporal and the non-temporal aspects of narrative structure, what I choose to call the chronologic[33] and the logic. Opinion is divided as to the relative significance of each of these; Claude Bremond for example is quite adamant as to the primacy of the chronologic: "L'object du récit est le temps et non l'éternité: l'énonce du devenir du choses épuise leur sens proprement narratif. Qu' après cela le récit puisse être asservi, par certains genres littéraires et par certaines idéologies, à exprimer un sense second, est que ce se sens sécond puisse à l'occasion se reduire à un jeu d'antinomies conceptuelles, ce n'est pas douteux, mais c'est un autre problème."[34] This is a position with both Claude Lévi-Strauss and A.J. Greimas substantially, if not entirely, refuse. For them narrative consists in the systemic logic independent of the particular chronology of a given text. [35] I shall have occasion to turn to this distinction many times.

In its temporality narrative rewrites, as it were, the world. The way
of its expression is not dependent on conventional experience or
perception; narrative does not reflect or imitate. Its relationship
to that world is, though in a very narrow sense, contingent, or unmotiv-
ated.[36] In the everyday world we may, indeed we do, account for
ourselves and our own histories in narrative terms[37] and in so doing
we are creating a text which has meaning, a coherence, a significance
in the same way as in a text which is publically communicated. The
simple copula '... and then ...' is (like television) both of the every-
day world and not of it, and in the telling of a story the ambiguity and
uncertainty of the world which surrounds it is progressively reduced.
A story begins with a more or less arbitrary delimitation of what will
be of potential significance both in events and context. As it unfolds
the narrative reduces, to borrow an expression from elsewhere,[38] the
level of 'potential surprise'. So when we are surprised or shocked by
an event in, for example, a Hitchcock story, that surprise is in a sense
expected.

But narrative is more than just a chronologic, its meanings are not
just dependent on its formal temporal structuring. A significant part
of the narrative, which I have already called the logic, consists in the
patterned interrelationships according to which content is ordered, its
synchronic arrangement.

Central to an understanding of this way of perceiving narrative is the
work on myth of Claude Lévi-Strauss. He opens the first volume of
his immense analysis of myth with the following often quoted words;

"The aim of this book is to show how empirical
categories - such as the categories of the raw
and the cooked, the fresh and the decayed, the
moistened and the burned etc., which can only be
accurately defined by ethnographic observation
and, in each instance, by adopting the stand-
point of a particular culture - can nonetheless
be used as conceptual tools with which to
elaborate abstract ideas and combine them in the
form of propositions.. I expect it to prove that
there is a kind of logic in tangible qualities,
and to demonstrate the operation of that logic
and reveal its laws".[39]

For Lévi-Strauss primitive culture is the product of the work of a

mythical figure, a bricoleur, who, faced with nature that is apparently

systematic (the diversity of species) and also a previous set of equally

concrete concepts, constructs a new building with the bricks of the old.

Connections and more connections are made between the elements that

make up the world of the 'primitive's sensory experience and these

connections are ordered within and by a logic which is in part dependent

on their natural ordering and in part on the natural classifying

capacity of the human mind. The result is culture.   More particularly

there results Lévi-Strauss's own analysis of myths which seeks to

identify the structures according to which they are organised; this

analysis, in all its multi-faceted complexity is of an intrinsic logic

of frog and jaguar, of girls mad about honey and tapirs, and it depends

for its understanding on an a priori (but at the same time concrete) pre-

logic of simple oppositions, the raw and the cooked, inside and outside

and so on.[40]   As the analysis proceeds the chronology of the narrative

tends to disappear.   Indeed there is very little respect given to the

integrity of the myths which he analyses and for this he has been much

criticised.[41]   But this lack, if such it be, can be mitigated if one

recognises that different cultures will have different styles of story-

telling (of course each culture will have many).   While one style may

stress the logic, the descriptive, another may well stress the

chronologic, it will be dense in the juxtaposition of events. Secondly Lévi-Strauss's own concern is with his myths as carriers of information and as attempted solutions to the perennial dilemmas of man's existence; as such while this concern would lead him to recognise the chronology of the texts it does much more positively encourage him to seek their connections in the mythic system as a whole.

The model of the narrative text has therefore three basic levels, distinct but obviously interrelated: the chronolgic, the logic and the content; the chronologic, which provides the narrative with its form, though as such it is not without semantic significance; the logic, the logic of sensible qualities, the logic of equivalence and transformation within whose mesh a specific set of cultural messages is generated and regurgitated, and finally the content itself dependent on a categorisation of and in the lived in world, a categorisation which may be similar to or different from that generated in the narrated text. For example, a journey from home to work in a particular story can act as illustration. It will advance the action, bringing perhaps the hero nearer to his ultimate test; it will, in its opposition present a category which in conjunction with others, such as country and city, life and death, generates a particular foundation of meaning which it will share with other stories of the culture (and indeed other cultures) and finally it betrays in this opposition the lived relation in the culture and society as a whole. Home and work, city and country, will be meaningful only if they have meaning outside the text, and indeed they come to the text redolent of meaning. Investigation of narrated texts, myths or television programmes, demands in the final analysis consideration of all these three levels of structuring and their interrelationship. [42]

The juxtaposition once again of myth and television as examples of narrated texts is deliberate. I have already suggested that they are, in a certain sense, formally equivalent, both at work in culture in a similar way. The problem now is to determine in what ways the formal skeleton can be given flesh - in what ways the similarity of myth in primitive society and television in our own can be given substance.

The mythical in contemporary culture has often been, and is increasingly becoming, remarked upon and discussed.[43] The disenchantment of the world, the arrival of new technologies, continuing manifestations of what for a better phrase might be called 'secular ecstasy'[44] have alerted students of the social and the cultural to the way the gaps in our over-rational universe are being filled. Attitudes to the connections that have been drawn are varied; the following from Donald MacRae is both prescient and among the more enlightened; it deserves to be well quoted:

> "Today the mass media of communication - press, film and
> television in ascending order of importance from this
> standpoint - are all introducing new ways of seeing the
> world and human relations. They play tricks with time
> and space; they bring the far near, and make the
> familiar mysterious; they make the famous and the
> great accessible, and at the same time make all
> personality equal and grey and evanescent; they
> make all causal relations simple and yet, because
> nothing can be fully explained and everything must
> be clear, they bring causality back to magic; above
> all, they make chance and fortune in affairs as vast,
> mysterious and important as ever the case was when
> Fortune was a goddess inhabiting her own shrine.
> We may deplore it, but we live in a world where myth
> and magic, aided by the off-beat poetry of advertising,
> resume some portion of their ancient state in the human
> heart." [45]

Perhaps what unites myth and the mythical as it is presented in primitive society and television as it is transmitted in our own, is the prestige accorded to the communication by those receiving it. While the nature of the legitimation in one society compared to the other has manifestly changed, still the weight of tradition, the embodiment of received wisdom, the oracular explanations of past, present and future and the assumed potency - the assumed capacity to effect changes - all conspire to identify structural and functional similarities if not identities. Secularization reduces the sacred to the prestigious - but the difference may only be in the word.

Above all both television and myth act as mediators and although not just between the real and the cosmic, significantly so. Television technology extends our sensory perceptions in a way manifestly injurious to the linearity of the printed page; it introduces synesthesia, it creates the global village; we are, literally, in touch.[46] But the technology itself is also part of the taken-for-granted world; at the touch of a switch and in ways mysterious and hence both distanced from our everyday experience but yet part of it, we can turn on to that other world which is at the same time our own. These two worlds juxtapose at the screen, both a domestic nodal point and a frame for the display of the limited, vicarious and often crucial experiences that television makes constantly available. The frame is significant; it both focuses on and defines a different reality; it is the locus of a continually practiced ritual.[47] Mary Douglas writes:

> "... ritual focuses attention by framing; it enlivens the
> memory and links the present with the relevant past.
> In all this it aids perception. Or rather, it changes
> perception because it changes the selective principles.
> So it is not enough to say that ritual helps us to
> experience more vividly what we would have experienced
> anyway. It is not merely like the visual aid which
> illustrates the verbal instructions for opening cans
> and cases.... It can come first in formulating

experience. It can permit knowledge of what would
otherwise not be known at all. It does not merely
externalise experience, bringing it out into the
light of day, but it modifies experience in so
expressing it."48

In a different but parallel context Siegfried Kracauer illustrates how

in the framing of the original script of The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari by

setting it within a narrative told by a madman, the original revolutionary

intentions of the authors were entirely transformed. The frame, then,

has physical, social, political and aesthetic dimensions and to be involved

with experiences that are framed, above all visually, is to be involved

in both the limited and the transcendent. 49

This framing is of course doubly confounded; narration acts also as a

frame and as such translates the world that is lived via its contingent

rules of transformation into a world that is told. And it is in the

telling, even in the essential anonymity of the telling, disguised by

those who speak it, that television and myth are close. The stories

in television are told, as from a distance, and that distance which may

be historical, geographical, social or cosmic, or all four, generates

the magic and the mystery which in primitive societies are associated

with myth.

Above all what myth does is to obliterate, only to redefine the conventional

notions of time and space; in defining its own reality the linearity of

time and the contiguity of space which are, at least in our own culture

and linguistic tradition,taken for granted, are replaced by a time that

is both reversible and ever present and a spatial ordering which has been

called elsewhere, in the context of film, surrogate. Compare for

example a discussion of film (in this case the arguments are equally

applicable to television) and Mircea Eliade on myth:

"Far from being 'realistic' film suppresses ordinary
reality as much as possible and replaces it with an
artifact of space and time.   The space and time of
the viewer is all but erased and replaced by the film...
But while one is viewing the film all places and moments
are present when they are shown.   Film has no past
tense, no was.'50

"... by 'living' the myths one emerges from profane
chronological time and enters a time that is of a
different quality, a 'sacred' Time at once primordial
and infinitely recoverable."51

This juxtaposition is meant to be suggestive rather than conclusive;

indeed there are as many disputes about the nature of film and television

as there are about myth, but the comparison is an important one neverthe-

less, and I shall return to it.

However one or two problems have appeared.   The first concerns the

apparent contradiction between an analysis which stresses on the one

hand the significance of the narrative, which is supremely a linear

chronological form and on the other the destruction of that chronology

in televisual and filmic texts.   But this is more apparent than real.

The televisual text consists both in immediacy on the one hand and in

recollection and anticipation on the other;   the immediacy is preemin-

ently visual, the diachrony of recollection and anticipation is

preeminently verbal.   In addition any one narrated text loses its

specificity as a narrative when it is placed alongside others.   Once

this is done the linear narrative chronologies with beginnings, middles

and ends, which define the integrity of a particular story, become

serialised;   the ends herald a new beginning and ends and beginnings

as such lose some of their significance.52   Indeed as both Mircea Eliade

and Claude Lévi-Strauss53 in their different ways recognise, mythic

narratives are carriers of basically other more symbolic messages,

which for Eliade relate specifically to the transcendence of time and

the identification of origins, and for Lévi-Strauss centre on the

solutions which a particular culture offers to the universal dilemmas

of human existence.   There are, of course, elements of both in

television.

The second problem follows from this but is less easily faced.   It

revolves around the question of what we are to make of a series of texts

whose main effect, if not purpose, seems to be the obliteration of

history; and correlatively, of what we are to make of texts which have

as part of their functioning an ability to incorporate, bricoleur fashion,

any and every item which may be of interest: "Myth", Ernst Cassirer

writes, "seems to roll up everything it touches into unity without

distinction...,Things which come into contact with one another in a

mythical sense - whether this contact is taken as a spatial or temporal

contiguity or as a similarity, however remote, or as membership in the

same class or species - have fundamentally ceased to be a multiplicity:

they have acquired a substantial unity."[54]

Cassirer is dismayed by the intrusion of such forms into historical and

therefore rational societies.[55]   Roland Barthes, from a different

perspective, is equally dismayed.   It is the naturalisation in myth,

the mystification that such insensitivity to history generates which is

at the centre of the polemics against the mythic in contemporary culture.

For him also myth is a way of speaking, but it is parasitic, parasitic on

and destructive of, the possibility of speaking the truth.[56]   The openness

of myth is a false openness and we are blind to its ideological activity.

His analysis is dependent on a theory which guides him to the specificity

of capitalist-bourgeois society and therefore of its culture.   It is

much quoted:

> "Reluctance to display its codes is a mark of bourgeois
> society and the mass culture which has developed from
> it." [57]

Its relevance and usefulness depends on whether the theory of culture, predominantly reflective, which it embodies is an adequate one and equally on whether, in culture, there is something as unique and specific as its bourgeois form. It also depends on whether we like that culture or not.

Much of the argument must centre on an ability to demonstrate theoretically and empirically that the narrative structures which we have been discussing, the chronologic and the logic of cultural communication, are universal in the sense that they persist across cultures and through time, and also on the ability to demonstrate in what ways these structures integrate with the content of the specific cultures in which they are made manifest. The task is an enormous one and easily outruns the entirely modest attempt in this thesis. Indeed even the distinction between structure and content is an artificial one, though it does help to distinguish the permanent from the impermanent, the fixed from the ephemeral in culture, and at the very least it should allow us to decide whether these distinctions are in any way meaningful.

A recent study of advertising makes a similar point. Varda Langholz Leymore suggests that the structure of advertisements is similar to that of the myths studied by Claude Lévi-Strauss, albeit for her in a degenerate way. Both myth and advertising she argues "strive to provide answers to the eternal polarities of the human condition. While the dichotomies, or the dilemmas, are universal, the specific answers are not.... The classificatory activity of the mind alone is both predetermined and universal. But the specific configurations of relationships between variables are culturally bound. The essential point is that the human mind is sensitive to certain problems which emanate from the human condition and are specific to the human species. These problems are

universally apprehended and as such constitute universal themes.
The specific solutions offered to them are, nevertheless, varied." [58]

We can take the reference to the human mind in whatever way we
choose;   the recognition that different cultures,
or aspects of them, are organised according to the same rules is not by
itself an invitation to search for and speculate about their origin,
but an invitation merely to return to the cultural texts for further
analysis.   These texts are as real and as concrete as anything that
human beings have created through their action, and should be investigated
systematically, accordingly. [59]

The universality of culture lies in its logic and in the demands for the
generation and exchange of meanings without which we are not human.   To
talk of system, structure, logic, order, patterns, is not however to impose
a static view or to reify what is forever changing, but it is to recognise
that there is, simply, a consistency in the activity of man and that that
consistency manifests itself in social and cultural relations.   In this
sense the cultural texts which are analysed, from myth to television,
are of their very essence conservative;   they speak coherence and generate
security - and as Marshal Sahlins argues: "... the isomorphism between
diverse codes - social, geographical, mythical, and economic - is neither
fantastic nor the product of a pure speculative interest, it is a real
condition of life." [60]

Marshal Sahlins' discussion, which involves an overturning of the classical
Marxian argument of the dependence of culture on material and practical
interest, is itself of particular interest for in many ways it runs
parallel to much that has been said here.   Sahlins is concerned to
develop a theory and a methodology adequate to identify both similarity
and difference in culture and to argue that culture, the generation of

meanings, treated as a coherent and self-sufficient set of complex

interrelationships, must precede the organisation of work and its

attendant social relations.   Culture cannot simply be derived from

material relations, and cultural logic is not simply a practical

utilitarian logic transformed into ideas.   On the contrary, the very

possibility of material existence is grounded in the coherence of the

system of culture.[61]

There are two aspects to his argument.   Firstly that culture, both that

of the primitive and of the modern, is concrete, the result of the

confrontation in the symbolic of mind and matter.

> "It is not merely species which are 'good to think'.
> Lévi-Strauss's famous dictum is applicable to all
> kinds of naturally occurring things and relations.
> The whole of nature is the potential object of the
> symbolic praxis, whose cunning, rather like Hegel's
> Reason, consists in this: that it puts to the
> service of its own intentions those relations among
> things existing by their own properties. "[62]

We would expect to find, and we do, contemporary culture generating forever

new sets of relations with what is to hand, but generating them according

to a logic which transcends their particular ephemerality.

The second aspect of his argument is that these relations are lived;

they comprise the warp and the weft of social activity; that whereas

the primitive lived his life according to the categories defined by

the totemic structure of his culture, we, perhaps more dominated by

appearance, live our life according to the logics of fashion in clothing,

food and other consumables - a   language preeminently of consumption.[63]

The fact that these relations are lived guarantees, for Sahlins, their

materiality; the fact that our daily, social, productive lives are

organised according to the structures and codes of culture transports

these structures from a world of subjective perceptions, in a way perhaps

more Durkheimian than Marxian, to objective facticity.

The analysis of television programmes follows from arguments like
these and from those advanced elsewhere in this introductory chapter.
With the tools provided by and developed from Vladimir Propp, Claude
Lévi-Strauss, A.J. Greimas, Christian Metz[64] and others, all of whom
have been concerned with the intrinsic analysis of culture, and its
codes, the social and cultural object, television, can be approached
and its significance more firmly understood. A full consideration of
their work in theory and in practice takes up the major part of this
thesis. But to do it in this manner, in other words working from the
text outwards, inevitably creates its own problems, and if pursued
fully, as is my intention, has a number of far reaching implications.
Central amongst these are the way in which we need to understand ideology
in contemporary culture and the contribution to it which television makes.
Central too, is the way in which television's culture (such a phrase
itself is entirely question begging) is articulated into the everyday
world and to the continuity and changes within our everyday experience.
I will return to these considerations again, but most substantially in
the final chapter.

Suffice it to say now that I see television as being part ideology, part
culture; both inside history and outside it, manifestly open to and
contributing to change, latently preserving forms of experience that
are resistant to change. The analysis of the structure of the message
immediately identifies a set of coherences beneath and within the
manifestly diverse; the relation of these coherences to others in
similar forms of communication within the same culture and within other
cultures opens the way to the identification of what might be called a
cultural rather than an ideological ground-base, upon which historical
manifestations of culture are constructed, and whose operation makes
these manifestations acceptable. The new and the unfamiliar are made

old and familiar while still maintaining their novelty, by their
incorporation into pre-existing patterns of experience; the trans-
formation is cultural, the motor is structural, and at the level of
the everyday where these processes are most visible and most significant,
change is, at root, very slow indeed.

The hypothesis with which I begin is therefore this: that our involvement
with television, an involvement which affects almost every member of our
society from infancy onwards, is an involvement with a type of commun-
ication which in its compression and redefinition of historical,
geographical, social and cosmic experience identifies a coherence, a
continuity and a commonness in culture, but to which, blinded by the
glare of manifest historical and other changes, of conflict and of
difference, we are unaware. Television, like myth is both structuring
and structured; the former referring to its process the latter to its
effect. When we watch television we are watching a series of messages
that both order our experience and define its categories, but which do
so in ways that transcend the historical conditions of that experience.
We need to understand through the analysis of the texts themselves how
this is achieved, but that, as they say, is another story.

Chapter 1. Footnotes and References

1. B.P. Emmett, The Television and Radio Audience in Britain, in
Dennis McQuail, Sociology of Mass Communications. Harmonds-
worth. 1972. 195-219.

2. cf. Joseph T. Klapper, The Effects of Mass Communication.
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Mass Communication, in L.A. Dexter and D.M. White. op. cit. 91-109.
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Harold Lasswell, The Structure and Function of Communication
in Society, in W. Schramm (Ed.), Mass Communication, Urbana,
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in W. Schramm, op. cit. 492-512; Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld,
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W. Schramm (Ed.), op. cit. 346-366; Dennis McQuail, Jay G.
Blumler and J.R. Brown, The Television Audience: A Revised
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personal Influence and Communications Behaviour in a Local
Community, in R.K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure.
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London. 1967; idem, Television Violence and the Adolescent
Boy. Farnborough. 1978; Ray Brown (Ed.), Children and
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London. 1977; D. Howitt and G. Cumberbatch, Mass Media, Violence
and Society. London. 1975; Grant Noble, Children in Front of
the Small Screen. London. 1975; Wilbur Schramm, Jack Lyle and
Edwin B. Parker, Television in the Lives of our Children. Stanford.
1961.
On content analysis, see B. Berelson, Content Analysis in
Communication Research. New York. 1952; Ithiel de Sola Pool
(Ed.), Trends in Content Analysis. Urbana. 1959; and also
Olivier Burgelin, Structural Analysis and Mass Communication,
in Dennis McQuail, Sociology of Mass Communication, op. cit. 313-328.
The difference, quite simply, between a structuralist approach
and that of content analysis, is that between a method which
eschews quantification, takes into account the form of a
communication, and deals substantively with its latent content.
The number of studies in the structuralist analysis of the mass
media are fast growing; on television, see John Fiske and John
Hartley, Reading Television. London. 1978, and especially their
bibliography, 207-209.

3. Studies of the production of news and documentary also have
    a long history; among the more recent see David Altheide,
    Creating Reality. Beverly Hills. 1974; Philip Schlesinger,
    Putting Reality Together: B.B.C. News. London. 1978; see
    also Warren Breed, Social Control in the Newsroom, a functional
    analysis, in Social Forces. 1955. 326-335; Malcolm Warner,
    Organisational Context and Control of Policy in the Television
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    also Philip Elliott, The Making of a Television Series. London.
    1972; James D. Halloran, Philip Elliott, and Graham Murdock,
    Demonstrations and Communication. Harmondsworth. 1970.

4. Clifford Geertz, Ideology as a Cultural System, in The
    Interpretation of Cultures. London. 1975. p. 207.

5. Influences here include the Frankfurt School, Antonio Gramsci,
    Roland Barthes and Louis Althusser. In Britain the spearhead
    of Marxian analysis has come from the Centre for Contemporary
    Cultural Studies in Birmingham; see their Working Papers in
    Cultural Studies, 1-10, and their occasional papers; see
    also many of the contributions to Screen, at least since 1974.
    More recently there has been something of a flood of critical
    study of the media, see for example: Glasgow Media Group,
    Bad News. London. 1977; the journal, Media, Culture and
    Society; the reader, James Curran, Michael Gurevitch, Janet
    Woollacott (Eds.), Mass Communication and Society. London.
    1977; the papers in Michele Barrett et al. (Eds.), Ideology
    and Cultural Production, London 1979. Some of the implica-
    tions of this literature will be discussed below, and also
    in Chapter 7.

6. The most substantive review of the anthropological literature
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    Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions, Papers
    of the Peabody Museum, Harvard Vol. XLVII No. 1. 1952. And
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    Bronislaw Malinowski, Culture, Encyclopedia of the Social
    Sciences, IV. 1931. 621-645; more recent anthropological dis-
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    McKinney Tiryakin, Theoretical Sociology. New York. 1970. 499-527;
    James A. Boon, Further Operations of Culture in Anthropology,
    in Louis Schneider and Charles Bonjean, The Idea of Culture in
    the Social Sciences. Cambridge. 1973. 1-32; Clifford Geertz,
    Ideology as a Cultural System, op. cit.; Edmund Leach,
    Culture and Communication. Cambridge. 1976; Marshall Sahlins,
    Culture and Practical Reason. Chicago. 1976. Among sociologists
    who have a place for a notion of culture as such, admittedly few,
    Talcott Parsons seems preeminent: see his The Concepts of
    Culture and Social System, American Sociological Review. 1958.
    23. 582-3 (with A.L. Kroeber), Culture and Social System Revisited,
    in Schneider and Bonjean, op. cit., and of course The Social
    System. New York. 1951, and Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative
    Perspectives. New York. 1966.

7. In a sense this is essentially the story of sociology as a
    discipline. Its distinctiveness vis-à-vis anthropology is
    defined as much by its subject matter as by its methods.

8. In anthropology see Max Gluckman, Custom and Conflict in
    Africa. Oxford. 1956; and in sociology preeminently,
    Vilfredo Pareto, above all in The Mind and Society (4 Vols.)
    London. 1935.

9. At this stage my definition follows that of Claude Lévi-Strauss;
    see Chapter 3 for a further discussion and the presentation of
    a model of what I call in that chapter the mythic, and its
    relationship to commonsense.

10. A trivial observation, but one central to an understanding of
    comtemporary society. Central of course is Emile Durkheim,
    The Division of Labour in Society. New York. 1933.

11. Thelma McCormack, Folk Culture and the Mass Media, Archives
    Européennes de Sociologie. 1969. Vol. 10 (2) 220-237;
    she distinguishes between professional, applied and amateur
    culture.

12. The word 'mythical' here is deliberately ambiguous: while
    in the social sciences we would wish to be precise and use
    the term 'myth' to define a specific body of, or way of
    telling, stories of a particular kind, in common parlance
    the word 'mythical' is often used to identify the false,
    the phoney or the alien.

13. Alfred Schutz and Thomas Luckman, The Structures of the Life-
    World. London. 1974. p. 3. See also Alfred Schutz,
    Collected Papers. (3 Vols.). The Hague. 1973; and idem,
    The Phenomenology of the Social World. London. 1972.

14. A characterisation of the everyday world discussed by
    Maurice Nathanson, in Phenomenology and Typification, in
    Social Research. Vol. 37. No. 1. Spring 1970. 1-22.

15. Alfred Schutz, The Problem of Rationality in the Social World,
    in Dorothy Emmett and Alisdair MacIntyre, Sociological Theory
    and Philosophical Analysis. London. 1970. p. 98.

16. Nathanson, op. cit. p. 2.

17. Suzanne Langer, Philosophy in a New Key. Cambridge, Mass.
    1951. esp. p. 287. see also, Peter Berger, The Social Reality
    of Religion. London. 1969.

18. C.D. Burns, The Sense of the Horizon, in Philosophy. Vol. VIII.
    No. 31. July 1933. p. 302.

19. The source of the distinction between langue and parole is
    Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics. New
    York. 1959, (London. 1966). See my discussion in Chapter
    2.

20. Stuart Hall, Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse.
    Centre for Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham. Mimeo.
    1973.

21. <u>Structure</u> can then be understood in terms of the patterns of meaning which can be shown to exist within a series of texts and upon which the specific meaning of a specific text is seen to depend. The different levels of structuring are often referred to as <u>Codes</u>. The series of individual items of communication comprising the <u>Message</u>, become - once they are treated as an object of analysis - the <u>Text</u>. The texts themselves partake of wider unity (or unities) that of the <u>Discourse</u>. See chapter 4 below.

22. Umberto Eco, Articulations of a Cinemantic Code, <u>Cinemantics</u>. 1. Jan. 1970. 3-9; <u>idem</u>, Towards a Semiotic Inquiry into the Television Message, <u>Working Papers in Cultural Studies</u>. 3. Autumn 1972. 103-121; <u>idem, A Theory of Semiotics</u>. London. 1977.

23. In relation to ritual language, see Maurice Bloch, Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation, in <u>European Journal of Sociology</u>. XV, 1974, 1, 55-81.

24. Lev S. Vygotsky, <u>Thought and Language</u>. Cambridge, Mass. 1962. 142.

25. Roman Jakobson, Closing Statement. Linguistics and Poetics, in Thomas A. Sebeok (Ed.) <u>Style in Language</u>, Cambridge, Mass. 1960. 350-377.

26. Basil Bernstein. <u>Class, Codes and Control</u>. esp.. Vol. I. London, 1971.

27. Raymond Williams, <u>Television, Technology and Cultural Form</u>. London. 1972; T.C. Worsley, <u>Television, the Ephemeral Art</u>. London. 1972.

28. Charlotte Brunsden and David Morley, <u>Everyday Television</u>: 'Nationwide'. London. 1978.

29. W.B. Gallie, <u>Philosophy and the Historical Understanding</u>. London. 1964. p. 29. See also Kenneth Burke, <u>Rhetoric of Motives</u>. New York. 1955. p. 197.

30. For a preliminary analysis, Roger Silverstone, An Approach to the Structural Analysis of the Television Message. <u>Screen</u>. 17. No. 2. 1976. 9-40. And of course, chapters 6 and 7 below. See also Paul Rock, News as Eternal Recurrence, in Stanley Cohen and Jock Young, <u>The Manufacture of News</u>. London. 1973. 73-81.

31. Dell Hymes, Breakthrough into Performance, in Dan Ben-Amos and Kenneth Goldstein. <u>Folklore. Performance and Communication</u>. The Hague. 1975. 11-74; Roger D. Abrahams, The Complex Relations of Simple Forms, <u>Genre</u>. 2. No. 2. June 1969. 104-128.

32. R.O. Kolker and J. Douglas Ousley, A Phenomenology of Cinematic Time and Space. in <u>British Journal of Aesthetics</u>. Vol. 13. 4. Autumn 1973. p.390. On the interdependence of syntax and semantics, see, for example, Jerrold J. Fodor and Jerry A. Katz, The Structure of a Semantic Theory, in Jay F. Rosenberg and Charles Travis (Eds.) <u>Readings in the Philosophy of Language</u>. New Jersey. 1971. 472-514.

33. A deliberate neologism, for which no apology is made. It identifies a particular level of narrative structure.

34. Claude Brémond, Logique du Récit. Paris. 1973. 89-90.

35. There is a very full discussion of both these approaches to narrative and to the mythic in Chapter 4 below.

36. Roland Barthes, Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits, Communications. 8. 26-27, where he writes this: 'Ainsi, dans tout récit, l'imitation n'est pas de 'représenter', elle est de constituer un spectacle qui nous reste encore très énigmatique, mais qui ne sourait être d'ordre mimétique; la 'réalité' d'une séquence n'est pas dans la suite 'naturelle' des actions qui la composent, mais dans la logique qui s'y expose, s'y risque et s'y satisfait....Le récit ne fait pas voir, il n'imite pas; la passion qui peut nous enflammer à la lecture d'un roman n'est pas celle d'une 'vision' (en fait nous ne 'voyons' rien), c'est celle du sens....'

37. William Labov and Joshua Waletsky, Narrative Analysis: Oral Versions of Personal Experience, in June Helm (Ed.), Essays on the Verbal and Visual Arts. Proceedings of the 1966 Annual Spring Meeting of the American Ethnological Society. Seattle. 12-44.

38. See the discussion of uncertainty in business decisions in Tom Burns and G.M. Stalker, The Management of Innovation. London. 1961. pp. 110-119; and also C.G. Carter, G.P. Meredith and G.L.S. Shackle, Uncertainty and Business Decisions. Liverpool. 1954.

39. Claude Lévi-Strauss, The Raw and the Cooked. London. 1969. p. 1.

40. Once again, Lévi-Straussian observations; see Chapters 3 and 4 below.

41. In particular the discussion between Percy Cohen and James A. Boon in Man: Percy S. Cohen, Theories of Myth, Man. Vol. 4. No. 3. Sept. 1969. 337-353; and James A. Boon, Lévi-Strauss and Narrative, Man. Vol. 5. No. 4. Dec. 1970. 702-3; see also Terence S. Turner, Oedipus: Time and Structure in Narrative Form, in Robert F. Spencer, Forms of Symbolic Action. Proceedings of the 1969 Annual Spring Meeting of the American Ethnological Society. Seattle. 1969. 26-68.

42. See J.M. Lotman and A.M. Pjatagorsky, La Texte et le Fonction, Semiotica. 1. 1969. 205-217, for a similar analysis, and below, pp. 205ff.

43. see footnote 1 Chapter 3.

44. This phrase is adapted from Bernice Martin, Notes for a Dying Counter-Culture. Mimeo. 1977.

45. Donald MacRae, Advertising and Sociology, Ideology and Society. London. 1961. p. 84.

46. See in particular Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1964; idem and Quentin Fiore, The Medium is the Massage. New York. 1967; idem, War and Peace in the Global Village. New York. 1968; and Marshall McLuhan, The Implications of Cultural Uniformity, in C.W.E. Bigsby (Ed.) Superculture: American Popular Culture and Europe. London. 1975. 43-56.

47. Mircea Eliade, <u>Myth and Reality</u>. London. 1964. p. 140.

48. Mary Douglas, <u>Purity and Danger</u>. Harmondsworth. 1970. p. 79.

49. Siegfried Kracauer, <u>From Caligari to Hitler</u>. Princeton. 1947. 65-67.

50. R.P. Kolker and J. Douglas Ousley, <u>op. cit.</u> p. 391.

51. Mircea Eliade, <u>op. cit.</u> p. 18.

52. see especially Raymond Williams, <u>op. cit.</u>; and on alternative
     perceptions of time see Edmund Leach, Two Essays Concerning the
     Symbolic Representation of Time in Edmund Leach, <u>Rethinking
     Anthropology</u>. London. 1961. 124-36.

53. Mircea Eliade, <u>The Myth of the Eternal Return</u>. London. 1955;
     Claude Lévi-Strauss, <u>Structural Anthropology</u>, (Vol. 1.).
     Harmondsworth. 1963, and elsewhere. See below, chapter 3.

54. Ernst Cassirer, <u>The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms</u>. Vol. II,
     Mythical Thought. New Haven and London. 1955. p. 63.

55. <u>idem</u>. <u>An Essay on Man</u>. New Haven and London. 1944; <u>The
     Myth of the State</u>. New Haven and London. 1946.

56. Roland Barthes, <u>Mythologies</u>. London. 1972; but see also
     Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, <u>Dialectic of Enlightenment</u>.
     New York. 1972; and Jurgen Habermas, Towards a Theory of
     Communicative Competence, in Hans Peter Dreitzel, <u>Recent
     Sociology</u>. No. 2. London. 1970; and his <u>Legitimation Crisis</u>.
     London. 1976.

57. Quoted as the epigraph on page 1 of Glasgow Media Group, <u>Bad News</u>.
     London. 1976. (From Roland Barthes, Introduction à l'analyse
     structurale des Récits, <u>Communications</u> 8. p. 22).

58. Varda Langholz Leymore, <u>Hidden Myth</u>. London. 1975. 154-5.

59. Clifford Geertz, Introduction to Clifford Geertz (Ed) <u>Myth,
     Symbol and Culture</u>. New York. 1971, x-xi:"..African passage
     rites, nineteenth century novels, scientific theories, English
     landscape paintings, or the ways in which moral judgements are
     phrased, have as good a claim to public existence as houses,
     stones and trees, and are therefore as susceptible to objective
     investigation and systematic analysis as these apparently harder
     'realities'."

60. Marshall Sahlins, <u>Culture and Practical Reason</u>. Chicago. 1976.
     p. 41.

61. <u>ibid</u>. p. 266: "...No cultural form can ever be read from a set
     of material forces as if the cultural were the dependent variable
     of an inescapable practical logic. The very form of social
     existence of material force is determined by its integration in
     the cultural system."

62. ibid. p. 196.

63. ibid. p. 148: "The bourgeois totemism is potentially more
     elaborate than any wild (sauvage) variety, not that it has been
     liberated from a natural-material basis, but precisely because
     nature has been domesticated."

64. See chapter 4, for an extensive discussion of theories of
     narrative.

CHAPTER II

Television and Language

If television communicates, it does so both through language and as a language itself. The distinction is an important one. Most obviously much of what is heard and seen on television is in language. The news is read; documentary films have commentaries; the characters in a drama speak. The language that they use, except perhaps in circumstances where a particular effect is desired, is that of a form of standard English which, rightly or wrongly, is assumed to be widely understood. The problems raised by its analysis are the problems at the heart of linguistics, the study of natural language.

But television, quite obviously, is more than just words. It contains images, music and natural sound, and for the purposes of this thesis, most importantly stories. As a form of communication it is both complex and direct. Its complexity lies in the density of its communication and its directness in the channelling of that density in patterns which are both expected and remarkably simple.

In the totality of its communication we can certainly ask whether television is like language and we can use - with care - the models and theories developed for the study of natural language to illuminate that totality. Such models and theories may only take us a short way, for as Edward Sapir remarks, "all grammars leak"[1] and indeed when the "grammar" is no longer that of a natural language but that of an assumed semiotic system, then there may be more holes than wholes.

The movement from the study of language to the study of something that
might be (or should be) like language is a movement speculated on by
Ferdinand de Saussure and indeed by Emile Durkheim.[2]   It brings with
it a concern with the full range of human communication and with that
concern an assumption of its systematic nature.[3]   Within the system
everything signifies and that signification consists in the play of
difference.   The sign gains its uniqueness and its value in its contrast
with all other signs.   Within this premise and within the premise also
of the essential arbitrariness at the heart of signification[4] the basic
thrust of semiotics and structuralism gains its momentum.   If culture
is like language then it is so in its structuring.   It is in the patterning
of its constraints that the connection will be found.   Hence the search
is for a grammar, for the identification of codes, for the determination
of levels within the act and the system of communication which contains
the act.   The question here is not so much how communication actually is
effected, a question that would demand consideration of language in use,
but a question of how it is possible, and as such it is a question which
leads to a search for an answer beneath the manifestations of speech and
to an abstraction away from the speech act itself.   The distinction
between langue and parole in Saussurian terminology is a basic one
therefore, however inadequate or incomplete its formulation, for within
it we can begin to understand both the constraint and freedom of
language.

Similarly for television; an understanding of its communication also
demands a consideration of what it is that constrains it, and correlatively
on what the creative freedom and ability to generate endlessly unique
texts rests.   One of these constraints, perhaps the most obvious, perhaps
only the most accessible to analysis, is that of narrative, by which is
meant the set of rules necessary and sufficient to the definition and the

telling of a story. Other constraints, for example, which have their

source in the image or in music are also of great importance, though they

will be very little considered here.[5]

In this chapter I shall consider the relevance of the linguistic

metaphor for the study of television[6] and I shall do so in four

different but, I hope, compatible ways; firstly by a brief consideration

of the contrasting assumptions underlying any study of language;

secondly by considering the linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure and

its influence; thirdly by a more detailed analysis of the semiotic

work of Christian Metz; and finally by a consideration of the

relationship between language and aspects of culture.

II

"For man was not created twice, once without language and once with
language.   The emergence of Homo in the animal series may have been
helped by his bodily structure or his nervous organisation, but it is
due above all to his faculty of symbolic representation, the common
source of thought, language and society."[7]

Man's uniqueness in the world is the consequence of his capacity to

produce symbols,and language, the preeminent symbolic form, is the

symbol of that capacity.   This much said and not seriously disputable,

it is nevertheless the case that the study of language is by no means

unproblematic.

We can accept, for example, language's universality without necessarily

accepting any value in the search for linguistic universals.[8] We can

accept that language depends on a community of speakers and also sustains

that community without necessarily accepting the validity of that community

in any given situation.[9]   And we can accept that language constructs and

creates the world for man without necessarily accepting that in so doing

its capacity to do so is not otherwise determined by more "material"

factors and circumstances.[10]   These are abiding problems in the study of

language and they spill over as we shall see into the study of language

systems,[11] semiotics and narrative.

And indeed there are further distinctions to be made. Much of
contemporary linguistics is synchronic; it consists in the study
of language's systemic nature, in its characteristics at any one time.
But it was not always so.[12] Changes in language are, seemingly, no
longer of great concern. More vital, perhaps, is the dispute between
those who see language in terms of a relationship between langue and
parole, in terms of a set of permanently relevant codes and rules
appropriate to the various levels of linguistic experience, phonetics,
semantics, syntactics, and to the transformations between them;[13]
and those who see language as speech, indexical, personal, above all
active.[14] On the one hand the study of language lays claims to
objectivity and to science, on the other to subjectivity and to philosophy.
The source of this schism, of course, lies deep in the disciplines that
study man.

And finally there is in the study of language the distinction to be made
between its different modes, both in terms of the medium of its expression,
whether written or oral and also in terms of the different forms within
which a different language might appear.

These distinctions which otherwise bear so centrally on any consideration
of natural language must also be relevant to any discussion of other forms
of communication supposedly like language. Of course, not only is the
language of television one of sight and sound, but it is also, and as a
consequence, one which is hardly amenable to the sort of reduction to the
minimal units that, for example, in phonetics, grounds the study of natural
language.

Nor is it possible, nor reasonable, to consider televisual language as a

context independent communication.   If one is to look for rules within

it then these rules, however abstractly represented, need much that is

beyond them and beyond the specific communication to be fully comprehended.

Many would say the same, of course, of the study of natural language and

in particular of the attempt to reduce semantics to a play of abstract

logic.[15]

If one is to argue therefore that television is like language, and if such

an argument is to allow one to approach more closely to what television is,

then these questions are central.

But if television's communication can, reasonably, be considered like a

natural language it is both more and less than such a language.   It is

less because we cannot identify two distinct levels.

of articulation,[16] nor can we unambiguously define the minimal unit of

its communication (what is the equivalent to the word or lexeme in a

television programme?).   But it is more, not only because of its visual

component but because by virtue of this inability to identify such units,

we are forced to consider television as a discourse;   the analysis of

television and film in terms of language involves a profound change of

scale.   The study of natural language, with one or two rare and hesitant

exceptions, stops with the sentence.[17]   Problems of syntax, semantics

and phonology never outreach this basic unit of expression;   they never

need to.   So questions of language beyond the sentence involve a trans-

formation in the nature of these questions.   As Emile Benveniste points

out: "The sentence, an undefined creation of limitless variety, is the

very life of human speech in action.   We conclude from this that with the

sentence we leave the domain of language as a system of signs and enter

into another universe, that of language as an instrument of communication,

whose expression is discourse."[18]

An examination of what, if Benveniste is to be followed, must now be

television's communication rather than its language involves, _ipso facto_

a concern with constraints operative beyond the sentence.   Such a

movement into the study of narrative undertaken in this thesis is justified

simply by such considerations.   It is supported,though not unproblematically,

by those who have made in poetics and in the study of folklore a similar

movement.[19]   The model of the sentence, and in particular its simple

structure of subject, verb, predicate becomes a model of action which

finds its representation in narration: the hero, his action, the object

of his action.[20]   Beyond the sentence, narrative exists as an essential

constraint . And indeed language, story and as Ernst Cassirer suggests,

play,are essentially interrelated:

> "L'activité verbale n'est pas seulement une circonstance
> concomitante de toute activité de jeu: elle en est le
> stimulant continuel.   Le goût du jeu est lié dans une
> large mesure un goût de la fabulation et ne peut en être
> séparé."[21].

Narration, the act of constructing or speaking a narrative, is part of

the communication process grounded in language. Narrative both depends

on andextends language.   Its forms, albeit of their very nature less

tangible, seem to work in the same way as the forms of natural language

and the distinction between langue and parole can and is made by those

who study narrative and poetics.[22]

Narrative constrains.   To recognise this is to recognise a further dimension

of the way in which language both limits what can be said and also through

those limits both constructs and destroys the world;

"Un éternale anathème semble jeté sur le langage; tout
ce qu'il nous montre: il nous le cache aussi, et fatalement;
dans son effort pas rendre consciente et manifeste la nature
des choses, pour la saisir dans son essence, il la déforme
et la défigure necessairement." 23

It is in the nature of language to misrepresent, although to suggest

that this misrepresentation is revocable is of course, by definition,

absurd. What falsehood we may detect in the language of others is

only detected through the falsehood of our own language. The creation

of the world in language is a creation of the world which is both

independent because in language we create it and dependent because the

world precedes that act of creation. The disentangling of this lies

at the heart of any consideration of language's truthfulness and by

extension, to its contribution to ideological manifestations.

However these issues are resolved two things are clear; one is that

language is not neutral in its reflection of a given reality and

secondly that that lack of neutrality is the product of an activity

in which, through language, and only through it, we come to know and to

control the world. I will of course return to these considerations

in the final section of this chapter.

III

To begin at the beginning - or at least with Ferdinand de Saussure.

His Course in General Linguistics has been recently much discussed

and much studied. His arguments are, therefore, well known. They

take as their point of departure the attempt to establish the science

of linguistics sui generis,[24] and to do so therefore in a way which

makes language autonomous and irreducible. Language is neither mind

nor society, though it is of course both psychological and social.[25]

In practice, and guided by this recognition, the study of language becomes the study of a system and of that system's structure.[26] Language is seen in terms of an interrelation of diverse units through whose articulation in word and sentence, meaning is created.[27] In order to make this approach viable three things are minimally required and much of Saussure's central effort is directed towards establishing them. The first is the nature of the system, the second is its basic unit, and the third is the inter-relationship of these basic units.

Language is both rules and the application of these rules; it is both _langue_ and _parole_.[28] The rules are both essential and social, they create in language the possibility of what is in speech both accidental and individual. It is language (_langue_) which is the object of study and language is for Saussure, "a well defined object in the heterogeneous mass of speech facts";[29] it is something that can be studied independently of its manifestation in speech; it is homogeneous in that it consists only in the union of meaning and sound images; and finally it is concrete: "linguistic signs, though basically psychological, are not abstractions; associations which bear the stamp of collective approval - and which added together constitute language - are realities that have their seat in the brain".[30]

Speech on the other hand, the specific complexity of the actual act of communication, becomes peripheral.[31] Saussure is not concerned with the construction of meaning in a sentence or of the grammar of a sentence, but with the potential of meaning prior to the sentence, and to a grammar reduced to basic essentials prior to the specific grammar of the spoken or the written sentence. Thus he defines a different object for linguistics than that subsequently defined for it by Noam Chomsky.[32]

The system is <u>langue</u>, therefore, and its basic units are signs. "The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound image."[33]   Sounds relate to, but are independent of, the world of material objects, a point made more clear by Louis Hjelmslev who sees beyond the sign an undifferentiated purport or matter/which the sign in its totality gives expression.[34]   The sign is constitúted therefore from within, and that doubly so.   On the one hand what is important is its intrinsic structure, the concept and the sound image, the signified and the signifier respectively, and on the other its inter-relationship with other signs, a relationship which is intrinsic to the system of <u>langue</u>.

In the sign, the unity of signifier and signified, sound image and concept, is arbitrary.[35]   Nothing naturally or necessarily connects the sound <u>cat</u> with the concept of <u>cat</u>;   it is only by convention, a convention which differs from one language to another,   that   the two are, albeit rigidly, linked together.   Arbitrariness is not synonymous therefore with a fluid randomness but on the contrary with a socially defined and accepted immutability.[36]   The relationship of signifier and signified in this sign is not natural, in the sense that it is given in the nature of things, but it is historical (in the Marxian sense) in that it is a social production. It is nevertheless fixed.[37]

A second dimension of the sign, stressed but not given as much consideration as the first by Saussure, is its linearity.[38]   Signs unfold in time and while this may be obvious it is however also ambiguous, for as we shall see what constitutes the system of signs in <u>langue</u> is, for Saussure, both time and space (syntagmatic and associational), and it is therefore only in speech that the exclusive linearity of the sign relation is made manifest.

If the essential bond within the sign is not fixed naturally its

permanence can only be guaranteed in its relationship with the other

signs of the system - by its difference.   Its value consists in its

unique place in a system of other unique signs.   Such a value is   ›

functional; it is constituted in the play of the interdependence of

distinct units.   "In language there are only differences";[39]. consequently

the analysis of language is principally the constituting system of these

differences, it is principally synchronic.   "In language, as in any

semiological system, whatever distinguishes one sign from the others

constitutes it."[40.]

In general, therefore, within the system of _langue_ signs are to be

distinguished from each other in two ways.   Of these two ways the

syntagmatic and paradigmatic (associational) identify that system as dia-

critical; each sign is defined by a grid, one dimension of which, the

syntagmatic, relates to the place of a sign in a consecutive series.

. Its value is the product of its opposition to all the signs that precede

or follow it, a temporal relation based on the linear nature of language.

In a discourse words are, in Saussure's metaphor, "chained" together.

Outside discourse, and in a sense preceding it, signs are related in their

difference in another way.   In this, the paradigmatic (associational),

signs are both linked together and distinguished from each other simply

in the recognition that they are mutually replaceable.   To replace something

by another that works equally well but differently implies the mutual

identity of the terms, but this identity is formal. The paradigmatic dimension of

langue defines the potentially infinite range of alternative terms.   The

selection of one is by definition significant.   "We see that the coordinations

formed outside discourse differ strikingly from those formed inside discourse.

Those formed outside discourse are not supported by linearity. Their seat

is in the brain; they are a part of the inner storehouse that makes up the

language of each speaker. They are <u>associative relations</u>.

The syntagmatic relation is <u>in praesentia</u>. It is based on two or more terms that occur in an effective series. Against this, the associative relation unites terms <u>in absentia</u> in a potentialmnemonic series."[41]

Saussure's contribution to the study of language and,as he anticipated, to the study of signs in whatever form, for semiotics, is of course seminal. But like so many seminal statements it is incomplete. It is by virtue of his work that European structural linguistics, via Prague and in Paris and Denmark is as it is, particularly in the study of phonology.[42] But it would not be too far fetched to suggest that it is by virtue of his work that the linguistics of Noam Chomsky is as it is - radically different in all but the distinction between competence and performance (<u>langue</u> and <u>parole</u>).[43] Chomsky seeks in opposition to Saussure to produce a grammar of language, centrally concerned with syntax which, as it were, provides the operational bridge between an abstract capacity for language and its implementation in practice. The rules are grammatical, if one excuses the tautology, because they relate to the underlying complexity of speech. And the rules are syntactic because they are presumed to be independent of meaning though this independence is not a real one. Chomsky's rules are entirely dependent on his judgement about the meaning of the terms and their grammaticality. Similarly the attempts to generate the intrinsic semantics within the Chomskian mould fail precisely because knowledge of the meaning of the terms and often arbitrary decisions about those meanings are a necessary point of departure.[44]

Saussure however is centrally concerned with meaning though he never quite says so. The value of a sign is its meaning. But there is more to meaning than system specific value, and the meanings which language creates quickly outrun that language. The problem has generated in general two

responses, the first principally offered by Louis Hjelmslev has involved

digging deeper into the core of language and into the structure of the sign

and in its constraining system. The object of Hjelmslev's linguistics

is pure abstraction, neither semantics nor even phonetics "but an algebra

of language, operating with unnamed entities, i.e. arbitrarily named

entities without natural designation, which would receive motivated

designation only on being confronted with the substance."[45]

At the same time, however, Hjelmslev makes an important distinction, that

between denotation and connotation, which actually opens out the study of

meaning in a way that seems inclined to leave the study of languages

intrinsic form far behind.[46] Denotation is that aspect of meaning in

which the relationship between signifier and signified is both direct and

closed. I utter the word 'cat' and it is to cat that I refer. However

the reference to cat may in turn suggest all manner of other references

depending on the way that I say it, the context of the utterance, the values

of the encompassing culture. Connotation takes meaning beyond one system

and into another. Its study both defines the central task of semiotics

and also defines that task's impossibility.

Formally connotation or connotative semiotics refers to "a semiotics

whose expression plane is another semiotics",[47] or "a system whose

plane of expression is itself constituted by a signifying system".[48]

Whether connotation is just another and subsidiary coding as it is for

Umberto Eco[49], or whether it opens up "the general, the global and the

diffuse"[50], it is this, its extensiveness, which is the point at issue.

The identification of such a dimension of meaning demands a consideration

of language's full range of references; both of its context and of its

use. For Roland Barthes[51], it leads to the constitution of ideology

and .metalanguage and for Louis Hjelmslev also, despite his intention to found an algebraic linguistics, the study of language persistently and essentially outruns itself: "Linguistic theory is lead by an inner necessity to recognise not merely the linguistic system, in its scheme and its usage, in its totality and its individuality, but also man and human society behind language, and all man's sphere of knowledge through language." [52]

Connotation therefore provides a link between language and other semiotic or signifying systems and of course also a link between signifying systems seemingly far removed from language, but it also specifies in its very existence the reason why the pursuit of meaning must be endless.

This perception of the connotative dimension of language exceeds what Saussure has given us, but at the same time provides the basic means whereby semiotics, as a discipline can be undertaken. It provides, as it were, the bridge from the specificity of natural language on the one hand, the system par excellence, to the further specificities of other forms of language and other ways of communication. Some of these depend on natural language, others do not, but all of them it is presumed, can be understood in their capacity to generate meaning through the principles of analysis generated from the study of natural language and undertaken initially by Saussure.

IV

Television is one such signifying system and as such it is both complex and so far little studied. [53] Its complexity lies both in its specific nature, that it is a unique medium, but also in its use of other signifying systems, say for example narrative, which are themselves complex. In this it is like cinema, and of course the comparison goes a long way. Both

media are similarly constituted in their use of image, sound, dialogue, music, noise and titles. So close indeed are they that one student of the cinema and film, Christian Metz, finds it hard to make a clear cut distinction at the level of signification between them.[54]

It is therefore worth turning to the work of Christian Metz and this for a number of reasons. Firstly he does in the full range of his work provide a very precise methodological account of how a film can be understood semiotically. This involves most centrally consideration of the cinema as a language or more precisely as a language system.[55] He illustrates, in this, the nature of the move from the study of natural language to that of other forms of communication. Secondly his attempt is oriented towards establishing the specific nature of the cinema and the cinematic, and here the concern is to establish what it is that marks the uniqueness of the cinema, and what correlatively the cinema actually uses which might be considered as more general. Thirdly, and paradoxically, such a search raises questions as to the non-specificity of cinema, in other words questions about what it has in common with other forms of communication. And this leads me, at least, to a consideration of narrative as such.

As a preface let me refer in a little more detail to Christian Metz's comments on the relationship between cinema and television without which any argument purporting to be about television but cast exclusively in terms of cinema might seem like a sleight of hand.

In his discussion in Cinema and Language, Metz acknowledges the technological, the socio-political and the socio-psychological and effective differences between the two media.[56] The first are obvious , the second involve the different relationship with the state and the different processes of

decision making involved in administration and production, and the third

pre-eminently involve differences in the conditions of reception.   However,

intrinsically cinema and television are nothing more than two neighbouring

language systems, but ones which push this relationship much further than

is ordinarily done".[57]   Cinema and television are two technologically

and socially distinct versions of a single language sytem.   This is

defined in terms of its five dimensions, the auditory of which appear in

their full phenomenal and perceptual richness, and the visual (iconic)

manifesting "a partial and incomplete perceptual analogy in relation to

the reproduced object." [58]

What distinguishes television and cinema, for Metz, paradoxically from

the point of view of this analysis, is their use of narrative - narrative

being considered more important to the cinema than to television.[59]

This may well be true, though it depends on assumptions about the nature

of narrative which may not be correct, and in particular on the assumption

that narrative forms are only manifest in the dramatic, as opposed to the

documentary.   This remains to be established.

Christian Metz however does recognize what it is important for my argument

(inter alia) to establish and that is that the proper codes of narration

(and the very fact of narrativity) are neither cinematic nor televisual

but much more broadly anthropological and cultural.[60]

His work grows out of a tradition which begins with the work of Sergei

Eisenstein, whose attempts in theory and in practice to generate a

proletarian art of the cinema lead him to examine the visual structure

of the film.   Eisenstein was concerned with its particular nature, and

with the means whereby, in the juxtaposition of image, meaning would be

created in it.[61]   Metz is similarly concerned.   Both he and Eisenstein

seek the language of cinema.

Following Metz, then, in an analysis of this relationship, we can begin

by making a series of distinctions whose origin is in the work of Louis

Hjelmslev's dissection of the nature of the sign.[62] Saussure's primary

distinction within the unit of signification, the sign, was between, as

we have seen, the signifier (signifiant) and the signified (signifié), the

latter referring to the conceptual image, the former to its material-

isation in word or morpheme. Hjelmslev argued[63] that in fact each of

the two dimensions of the sign, he called them expression and content

respectively, can be further analyzed. To do this involves making a

threefold distinction applied identically to each of the terms. Both

expression and content consist in a relation of form, substance and

purport (or matter). The substance is what results from the imposition

of form, the product of a particular language, on purport, the unformed

material outside language. Purport in a sense both precedes language

but at the same time has no existence outside language.[64] A particular

language, with its particular construction generates substance, which

can be conceived of as purport formalized. As Hjelmslev writes:

"Just as the same sound can be put into different moulds, and the same

cloud takes on every new shapes, so also the same purport is formed or

structured differently in different languages. What determines its

form is solely the functions of the language, the sign function and the

functions deducible therefrom. Purport remains, each time substance

for a new form, and has no possible existence except through being

substance for one form or another."[65]

Schematically this can be represented as follows:

$$\frac{\text{The purport}}{\text{The form}} \quad = \quad \text{The substance of the expression} \left.\right\} \; = \; \begin{array}{l}\text{Saussure's}\\ \text{Signifier}\end{array}$$

$$\frac{\text{The purport}}{\text{The form}} \quad = \quad \text{The substance of the content} \left.\right\} \; = \; \begin{array}{l}\text{Saussure's}\\ \text{Signified}\end{array}$$

In Metz's analysis of the cinematic this classification reappears, though not unproblematically. Purport seems to refer to the pre-semiotic, to matter. We might wish to ask, for example, whether recorded music, recorded noise or recorded phonetic sound are the same when they appear on a film as opposed to on a record. The notion of purport allows us to formulate the existence of that which is common to, but perhaps differently given substance by, these two media of expression. This is a refinement which finds little place in Metz's own considerations, for his principal concern is with the relationship between expression and content, and it is to this that I will now turn.

With regard to the content the substance refers to the data or information derived from the world at large, and the form to its moulding.[66] For example, I might tell a story (form) about Red Riding Hood (substance) and my telling will draw on all manner of information from the world at large (purport). This will be incorporated into the tale and thereby given substance. The story in its content is complete.

The same stories (contents) however can be presented in different media; they can be told in different modes of expression. At this level of expression the distinction between form and substance holds. In the cinema the substance refers to the five dimensions which together give it its specificity; as I have already mentioned, they are moving photographic images, recorded noise, phonetic sound, recorded musical sound, and written titles. The form of the expression then refers to "the set of perceptual configurations recognisible in these (five)

substances; for example the regular recurrence of a syntagmatic

association between a particular phase of dialogue and some visual

motif etc".[67] Montage, in Eisenstein's theory, exists at this level -

that of the form of the expression or signifier.

Metz, principally concerned with the specificity of cinema, is in turn

almost entirely involved with the analysis of its expression and with

its form. He is concerned to identify what constitutes the cinema as

such, with questions of how it is constructed and above all -with its

capacity to generate meaning. His analysis of narrative, of the

syntagmatics of cinematic language, is thus an analysis in terms of its

technical specificity. Narrative for Metz is the narrative of expression

and its significance lies in the particular way cinema in its films

constructs its texts. But, as I have already remarked, narrative exists

also at the level of content, and here the problems transcend the partic-

ularity of the cinema, and are located in the realm of narrative as such.

Metz acknowledges the difference of course.[68] "The narrated event, which

is a significate in the semiotics of narrative vehicles (and notably of

the cinema), becomes a signifier in the semiotics of narrativity."

Metz is concerned principally, then, with the form of the expression,

with that part of the filmic experience which is particular to that medium,

and with the possible exception of television, to no other. He is

concerned, therefore, with the definition of the cinematic, with an

understanding of the cinema. The distinction, that between film and

cinema, occupies a great part of his terminological and methodological

treatise, Cinema and Language, and it represents the key to Metz's own

exploration of the nature of the language of the medium.

I shall in this discussion attempt to be brief.   The basic distinction

is that between cinema and film.   The film is what we see and hear.   It

has a materiality.   It has a beginning and an end.   It is produced.

It conveys meaning and we can analyse it.   We can consider it   as a text,   ;

self-contained, coherent, articulate, multi-faceted and multi-levelled.

When we watch a film we receive messages or even a dominant message.

We identify themes.   We follow a plot.   We are moved or informed, or

both;   our experience is aesthetic and cognitive.   But our understanding

of a film is not based just on what we see and hear, but also on what we

bring to it from our non-filmic cultural experience, an experience which

the film itself embodies and perhaps transforms.[69]

The content of the film is therefore not exclusively the property of film.

It is however presented systematically and if we are to understand it, or

theorize about it, we have to deconstruct what is given - the text of the

film in all its many dimensions.   That deconstruction involves a

reconstruction too, and it involves simultaneously the distinction between

film and cinema.[70]   Metz writes:

> "The goal toward which all descriptive work strives is not the
> film as a real discourse.... for the latter is already an
> achieved object before the analysis even begins.   What a
> description hopes to establish is, rather, the system which
> organizes this realization: the structure of this text, and not
> the text itself.   The system is no where clearly visible
> in the actual unwinding of the film: a system, as such,
> is never directly attested." [71].

Cinema, in Metz's terminology, is both what is specific to film and to

filmic discourse and is, at the same time, a construction of analysis.

The cinema is defined by what is present in films.   "The sum of traits

which in the films themselves are taken to be characteristic of what is

sensed to be a certain 'language system'." [72]   The analogy of the

difference between film and cinema is to be found in the difference between

a book and literature.

The phrase 'language system' is an important one, and it marks a point

at which the model of natural language reaches its limits when faced with

a signifying system of another order.   Metz is increasingly concerned

to define the linguistic nature of the cinema not in terms of the tight

coherence of the langue-parole model of natural language, but in terms of

a relationship of parole, the speech/texts of film, and a language

system.   The difference is clear.   The notion of langue suggests a

singularity of structure, of one code, from which the events of speech

are constructed.   Cinema, unlike natural language, has not one code,

but many, and a film, unlike an act of natural speech is constructed

according to many codes, some of which are exclusively cinematic, others

of which are not and will appear, like narrative, in other media of

communication.   "Thus just as a single code may be manifested in several

language systems, a single language system may manifest several codes,

some of which may not be specific to it."[73]

Codes, then, are specific levels of structuring; we can identify camera

movements, juxtapositions of image and sound, size and scale of shot as

specifically cinematic codes; narrative, music, images of fashion in

clothes or other consumables as filmic but not exclusively cinematic

codes.   The language system of cinema then comprises all the codes

which can be theoretically and practically interwoven in the construction

of a particular filmic or televisual text.   Metz again; "... to speak

of language systems as specific combinations of codes is to say that each

language system is the site of a work of structuration, of a specific

dynamic which ends up by conferring on the diverse 'regrouped' codes

positions which they did not have anywhere except in this system, which

thus characterizes the language system and not its codes."[74]

Metz is then able to make distinctions as between general and particular

codes, between the cinematic and the non-cinematic, between code and sub-code,

between codes of expression and codes of substance. [75]   The multiplicity

of codes present in the cinema destroys the coherence and homögeneity

of _langue_.   The cinema is multiform, and as a result there are no easily

identified or dominant basic units;   one can break up the text in many

ways according to the different levels of structuring which can be

identified as at work within it.   The notion of the cinematic sign is

therefore of little worth. [76]

The formulation of the language of cinema as a language system is a

product of Metz's more mature thinking.   In his earlier work, and in

particular in his _Essais_[77]   the existence of a system as such is not clearly
                                                                   articulated.
Nevertheless that early work is worthy of consideration, not only because

in it he attempts to make a number of clear distinctions between cinema

and natural language, but also and as a result of these attempts, he

undertakes an explanation of what he calls "la grande syntagmatique",

the formalization of the basic chronological (syntagmatic) structuring

of the cinema.   Such a formulation, which essentially consists in an

attempt to establish the basic units of filmic expression, grows out

of his exploration of the difference between natural language and

cinematic communication.   I have already mentioned some of them.

The cinema has no _langue_.   It is also, for Metz, a one way communication.

The image (_le plan filmique_) does not manifest much that makes it

equivalent to the sign in natural language.   In Metz's mercurial style

"Le signification cinématographique est toujours motivée, jamais

arbitraire."[78]   The key to the relationship of signifier and signified

in cinema is not arbitrariness but motivation, and that motivation is

predominantly analogical.   Both image and sound in film resemble their

object[79].

Questions however remain.   There are considerable problems, for example, in defin-

ing the basic unit of the cinema.   Is it comparable to the word of

natural language, or to the sentence?   Can the basic unit be broken down

like the word into its own constituent units;   does it in other words

                                                  as I have already remarked,
manifest two levels of articulation?   Metz's conclusion is that the

cinema does not manifest a first level of articulation parallel to the

phonemic in natural language, and that the basic units must indeed be

considered more like sentences than words.[80]   But even here there is

a qualification.   "Since the shot . is not made of words, it can

"correspond" only externally to the sentence, i.e. in relation to discourse.

As long as one seeks internal equivalence, one will be lead into an

impasse."[81]

This limited equivalence is justified in his paper <u>Denotation dans le film</u>

<u>de fiction</u>[82] by five considerations.   Firstly there are an infinite

number of images, while the number of words in a natural language is

limited.   Secondly these images are the creation of the film maker ,

again as such more like sentences than words.   Thirdly the information

they provide the viewer of the film is indefinite.   No amount of verbal

description could exhaust what an image contains.   Fourthly the image

is an assertion.   It speaks <u>about</u> something.   "L'image d'une maison ne

signifie pas 'maison',mais 'voici une maison'; l'image intègre en elle-

même ses embrayeurs verbaux, de seul fait qu'elle figure dans un film".[83]

And finally, and perhaps most importantly, signification in the cinema

depends very little on paradigmatic opposition or comparison.   Because

each image is virtually unique, its meaning is not derived from its

juxtaposition with other potential images, whose number is infinite,

but with its juxtaposition with other images previously or about to be

present in the film.   "Le grand phénomène linguistique de l'éclairement

des unités présentes par les unités absentes ne joue pas au cinema."[84]

The cinema is an art of presence. "Everything is present in film; hence the obviousness of film, and hence also its opacity. The clarification of present by absent units occurs much less than in verbal language. The relationships in praesentia are so rich that they render the strict organisation of in absentia relationships superfluous and difficult. A film is difficult to explain because it is easy to understand. The image impresses itself on us, blocking everything that is not itself."[85]

The significance of this paradigmatic poverty is clear. It leads Metz at once to a recognition of the syntagmatic as the heart of cinematic signification, and to narrative as its manifestation; "... it was precisely to the extent that the cinema confronted the problem of narration that, in the course of successive gropings, it came to produce a body of specific signifying procedures."[86] It is the ways in which cinema constructs itself in the film, and to the questions of "successivity, procession, temporal breaks, causality, adversative relationships, consequence, spatial proximity, and distance," which define what is essential... "Cinematographic language" is first of all the literalness of a plot".[87]

Before considering in more detail Metz's analysis of cinematic narrativity, a summary of what has been said so far is in order. The starting point is the distinction between film and cinema, between the text and its codes and between the activity of communication and the analytically determined conditions for the possibility of that communication. The language of cinema is not governed by a unitary langue, but by a language system, multiply coded, and these codes are of two kinds; those that are restricted to the cinema, and those that are not. Each will be presented in any given film, and because each film is a unique text, the films themselves are included among the codes of the language system as a whole. Furthermore each film is an act of creation, not just using or being constrained by, the various codes available,

but actually extending and modifying them. The relationship, then, between the parole and the langue of the cinema is more open and more fluid than that in natural language.

Significance in the cinema is predominantly dependent on units, difficult to define or to isolate, which are both larger than the equivalent basic units of natural language (words, morphemes, phonemes), less precise and are motivated. Both in terms of denotation, the specific anological reference of image to object, and connotation, the essentially symbolic reference of image and its range of potential meanings, the relations of signifier and signified are not arbitrary. In addition these two dimensions of signification relate to the two contexts in which meaning is generated in a film: within it, denotative, and beyond it, connotative. The former is essentially the domain of the cinematic, the latter that of the culture as a whole. A film obviously is involved with both. However Metz is principally concerned with what is specifically cinematic and this concern leads, precisely because it recognizes the poverty of the paradigmatic dimension in film language, to a discussion of narrative.

Narrative, for Metz, is the pivotal structure in the generation of cinematic signification - in syntagmatics, in presence and in the juxtaposition of the images throughout the length of the film. It is to the study of narrative that Metz, initially, at least, brings his attention. He recognizes that while the images of cinema differ from each other enormously, the structures of films resemble each other quite closely. "While no image ever entirely resembles another image, the great majority of narrative films resemble each other in their principal syntagmatic figures. Filmic narrativity..... by becoming stable through convention and repetition over innumerable films, has gradually shaped itself into forms that are more or less fixed, but certainly not immutable."[88]

The 'grande syntagmatique', Metz's formalisation of the basic modes

of cinematic denotation, is essentially a schema for the analysis of

narrative.   In this analysis Metz is concerned to isolate the units

through which the stories, themes and actions in films can be and are

told.[89]   He is concerned, for example, with the way that juxtaposition

of images chronologically can in a certain formation generate the image

of simultaneity.   He is concerned, then, with the specific way in which

the cinema constructs its tales. [90]

The emphasis is on construction.   It is in narration as opposed to

description that the discourse of film is generated.[91]   Every narrative

is a closed sequence, a temporal sequence in which the time of the telling

is different from the time of what is told (diegesis).   In Film Language

Metz defines narrative as "A closed sequence that proceeds by unrealizing

a temporal sequence of events", [92] and as one of the great anthropological

forms of perception.   The analysis of narrative in specifically cinematic

terms is at once the analysis of the primary processes and units of

denotation available to the film-maker and to the film audience. [93]

It is, always, an analysis of the form of the expression, of the way in

which cinema tells its tales, and not the form of the content, of the

way in which tales are told in any, or perhaps every medium.

The final, though still provisional, formulation of the 'la grande

syntagmatique' has eight basic categories. [94]   It is a classification

which has occasioned much comment, not least by Metz himself.   Both

the clarity and the relevance of the analysis remains open to question.

The categories seem more applicable to film of 'classic' narrative

structure, for example the films of Holywood or Ealing, than to those

like Tout va Bien, which have sought to revolutionize traditional forms

of film making. [95]   They are also not always easy to apply, even to

those filmic or televisual texts which fit the classic model. Metz's

analysis of Adieu Philipine suggests that much interpretive work is

necessary before attaching the correct label to the sequence.[96]

Nevertheless as I have found in my own analysis of the television play,

the categories and the form of the analysis offered by Metz both fit

well and allow me, as preliminary to the work I subsequently undertake,

to break up the continuity of the text into manageable, classifiable

units of expression.[97]

The eight units of Metz's 'grande syntagmatique' in increasing order of

temporal and spatial complexity are as follows:

The simplest unit is that of the shot.   It is an autonomous segment

defined by a unity of space, of an image unbroken by a cut in the film

or in video, by a change of camera.   One can distinguish the shot-sequence

in which within this basic unity a continuing or developing descriptive

or narrative action can be seen, and the insert, of various forms, which

act as visual interjections in a sequence of greater complexity.

Beyond the simplicity of the shot we are faced with a distinction between

those syntagmatic units which have a temporal function, and those which

do not, between the chronological and the a-chronological.   There are

two kinds of a-chronological syntagms;   the parallel or alternating

syntagm in which alternate images are presented which indicate without

reference to time or to action, a symbolic coherence.   The other, the

bracketing or embracing syntagm, brings together a succession of images,

again without any temporal reference, and again the purpose is to indicate

a symbolic coherence.

In practice this version/ of the /a-chronological syntagm is often difficult to

distinguish from the most primitive of the chronological syntagms,

Metz calls it descriptive, which while manifesting a temporal dimension,

refers to simultaneity rather than to sequentiality.   Successive images are

linked together spatially but at the same time there is a suggestion of a tempoi

connection between them, for example in a description of the countryside

one might see first a tree, then a branch of a tree, then perhaps a

stream, and then a hillside.

Narrative syntagms proper, those presenting sequential time, can also have

two forms: those that refer to more than one piece of time, as it were,

within the unit as a whole and those that refer to a single linear time.

The former is the alternating syntagm, for example in a chase, where two

separate events, separate in space, time and action, are juxtaposed in an

alternation which signifies simultaneity. They are happening at the same

time.

The simplest of the linear syntagms, and one much used in the television plays

used to illustrate the arguments of this thesis,[98] is the scene.   The

scene manifests a temporal and spatial unity and also a unit of action.

The image and the diegesis are one.   The scene, like the scene in the

theatre, is played in real time; the action is limited to one piece of

continuous space.

Contrasting with this simple unity of space and time, Metz places two

types of sequence, strictly speaking.   The first, the ordinary sequence,

presents an image of continuous space and action but one in which temporal

continuity is broken.   A scene is broken, reduced or pointed by the

elimination of items which are of no interest.   The second, the episodic

sequence, brings together interdependent acts different in time and

place, whose juxtaposition generates a symbolic message.   The breaks in

time are often of importance and signify, in their absence, development.

A number of brief comments are in order at this stage.   Metz is aware,
as we have seen, of the limitations of this formulation.   He points
out the range of its application, to its deductive status and to the
possibility and the necessity of refining it inductively.   He also
draws attention to its mutability, the result of the continuous activity
of film constantly affecting the code, constantly creating new modes of
expression.[99]

Above all in his comments on the nature of the Grande syntagmatique Metz
raises the question of the nature of the narrative, and in doing so
brings face to face its two dimensions.   On the one hand, we have seen,
there is the narrativity of cinema, on the other narrativity as such,
the generalised, perhaps universal capacity to tell stories;   the
cultural rather than the cinematic fact of narration.   Within this
juxtaposition lies a recognition of the dependence of film on its host
culture and a recognition too that within these relatively large minimal
units there can be identified countless smaller entities whose source and
justification lie beyond the film, beyond the cinematic.   Metz writes:

> "Thus when it reaches the level of the 'small' elements, the
> semiotics of the cinema encounters its limits, and its
> competence is no longer certain.   Whether one has desired
> it or not, one suddenly finds oneself referred to the myriad
> winds of culture, the confused murmurings of a thousand other
> utterances: the symbolism of the human body, the language of
> objects, the system of colours..... In each of these cases......
> the study (indispensible by the way) of the properly filmic
> creations of the appropriate significations will provide us
> with no essential paradigm: for those great creative
> tropes of meaning and of humanity will remain embedded in
> culture where only a very general semantics can illuminate
> them - even if their deep scattered appearance in films
> contributes,in return, to their partial reformulation."[100]

Paramount among these diverse semiotics is the code of narration, le
récit, and my task is the disentangling of it from that which is
specifically cinematic or specifically televisual. Their inter-
dependence is clear, but so is their independence. Metz in recognising
the distinction takes one path, that towards the cinema, and he makes the
point in this way: "Il existe donc deux enterprises distinctes et
qui ne sauraient se remplacer l'une l'autre: d'une part la sémiologie
du film narratif (comme celle que nous tentons); d'autre part l'analyse
structurale de la narrativité elle-même (Vladimir Propp, Claude Bremond
etc.), c'est-à-dire du récit consideré, independamment des véhicules
informatifs qui le prennent en charge (film, livre etc.).
L'évennement narré, qui est un signifié par la semiologie des vehicules,
devient un signifiant pour la sémiologie de la narrativité."[101]

I, in this thesis, will now take the other path, in other words towards the
discussion of narrative in its non-specificity, its cultural generality.
However, discussion of his work has been well worthwhile. Firstly because
in it the relation between language and another semiotic system is made
clear. Cinema is both more and less than natural language; in its
multiplicity, its motivation, in the pre-eminance of the syntagmatic.
Secondly the analysis of the way in which film, as a medium, structures
its expression, and particularly its syntagmatic forms of expression,
establishes the context for a similar analysis of television. Television
as a medium may therefore also be more or less than cinema in this
respect; though in what precise ways remains to be established.
Finally Metz defines the centrality of narrative for an analysis of
cinema and also by implication, of television.

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From the point of view of its expression, television is like film; as
the film or video unwinds we are presented with a succession of sounds
and images, a succession governed by rules we know and which make the

text readable. But clearly television is not expression alone.

I would like in this final section to turn to its content, though still in terms of its form in order both to draw out some of the wider implications of the discussion so far and to act as a prolegomenon to the considerations of myth and narrative which follow.

Substantively what will be asserted is this: that television is a public form of communication whose language is restricted in the sense of the term used by Basil Bernstein[102]; it is moreover by virtue of its form - in expression the result of its particular technology, in content the result of its narrative structures - an oral rather than a literate medium. And it is by virtue of both, the restriction of its language and its orality, generative of a folk culture, ritually preserved and to a degree ritually controlled. Inevitably the issues raised will outrun what it possible to discuss here, but I will return to them in subsequent chapters. Equally the essentially central role of narrative to the language of television's content will be presumed. The demonstration of that centrality will be the substance of Chapters 5 and 6, though even then much further work will need to be done.

The work of Basil Bernstein on the nature of language and in particular on its distinctive manifestations provides an excellent starting point. It is however important to realise that this work itself has its heritage in previous study of language although it differs from it in significant degrees. In particular, from the point of view of the arguments here, it differs from the theories of language suggested by Benjamin Lee Whorf . What unites both Whorf and Bernstein is a recognition of language's central importance in defining perceptual limits and thereby creating distinct thought worlds particular to each language community. What distinguishes them, of course, is the part ascribed in this linguistic determination to the social structure[103]. Indeed the nature of that

determination, both between language and thought on the one hand, and language

and society on the other, is a fundamentally unsolved problem for sociology.

For Benjamin Whorf language is a law unto itself; its rules covert and

overt, define both what it is possible to say and what it is possible

to perceive. At the heart of a distinct culture, lies a distinct language

and each language and each culture is unable to express, to understand or

to know what may be perfectly accessible to its neighbour. For Basil

Bernstein on the other hand language is crucially related to/the social

structure and in particular, though to a degree contentiously, to class

relations.[104] Language for Bernstein, is more of a mediator than a

creator, though a particular social group speaks distinctly and that

distinction of speech limits as for Whorf what can be said and under-

stood within it.

The arguments for and against both the linguistic relativity thesis, as

Whorf's case is labelled and Bernstein's correlation of class code and

educability are well-known and they need not be of central concern now[105].

Suffice it to say that there is no need to insist on the impossibility of

mutual translation for some important aspects of either thesis to be

maintained. While it may be empirically impossible to demonstrate in what

precise way language limits and controls cognition it is perfectly demon-

strable that different cultures express themselves differently and that in

so doing many other significant differences including their particular

view of the world will be affected. Individuals or groups may become bi-

lingual or be able, at the drop of an experimental hat, to discard that

with which they are most familiar and most comfortable. It is however just

this effortless familiarity with one's own natural language which is the

source of the plausibility of the relativity thesis. It is indeed
precisely as to the weight given to the language as an autonomously
determinant facet of human experience or alternatively to its dependence
on other determinants, to the structured interests expressed in social
relations, that the arguments continue[106].

We can therefore and following Whorf and Bernstein enquire into the
nature of television's language and do so now in terms of its content rather
than its expression. The concern is still with its form however; to what
is common and underlays the many diverse ways of presenting material in
this particular medium.

Television's communication is both indiscriminate and precise. It is in-
discriminate because there is no choice, no control over who is to receive
it, no direct communication between speaker and listener.[107] It is continuous
and total: it can be turned on or off at will. It can be watched or
listened to (or both) by those who agree or disagree or may not even
understand with what it is they are faced. But it is precise, in the sense
that it is a singular communication, inflexible to the normal demands of
social interaction and oriented therefore to a unitary receiver; the
audience, who have perhaps nothing more in common than their television set.[108]
Whatever the interpretation offered as to the social, economic or political
structure where this is the case, the presumed unity of the television
audience is a central phenomenon and must be the starting point for any
analysis of the nature of television's communication. The massness of
television has been the subject of much discussion and the concept of mass
                    It is
society much decried. /however in the sense just implied an inevitable
facet of any consideration of television. Television is a medium of mass

communication[109].

Much then is assumed in the communication, and for this reason if for

no other it is public[110] in the sense of the term suggested by Basil

Bernstein.   It is public in the enforced denial of individuality and

the correlative assertion of the generality of the context in which the

communication is undertaken.   The communication is public therefore

                                                    of
in terms of what is assumed and what the effects/that assumption have

on its form. Public language in. the context of mother-child interaction,

for example, has for Bernstein the following characteristics. It "contains

few personal qualifications, for it is essentially a language where the

stress is on emotive terms employing concrete, descriptive, tangible and

visual symbolism.   The nature of the language tends to limit the verbal

expression of feeling."[111]   The stress is on expressive symbolism and on

the present. No elaborate logic or ability to qualify allows for the

deferral of gratification or indeed for much more than a simple description

of a sequence of events. The world of public language is a world of the

here and now.

From the point of view of television's language and its public character

it is important to stress the significance of the non-verbal; for what

might be in face-to-face interaction the glance, the movement of the hand,

becomes in television the whole central panoply of the image. Important

too is the stress on the immediate, and many writers have noted the demand

in television and filmic communication of the here and of the present.[112]
There is no past in television, neither that of the society nor of the

individual. The image like the glance exists only once. R.P.Kolker and

J. Douglas Ousley write of film in this way: "Far from being 'realistic'

film suppresses ordinary reality as much as possible and replaces it with

an artefact of space and time. The space and time of the viewer is all

but erased and replaced by the film... But while one is viewing the film all

places and movements are present when they are shown. Film has no past

tense, no was."[113]   This is how it was: this is how it will be. Television

in this regard is identical to film.

The immediate, the visual, the expressive symbolism - all lead

to a view of public language as essentially social: dependent on and

defining a common set of experiences which make communication relatively

simple and uncluttered. It is, as Bernstein suggests, a language of implicit

meaning.

Once Bernstein's analysis is pushed further, it is the restricted nature of

public language on which he settles; the restricted and elaborated code

is the very familiar dichotomy which results. The distinction rests at the

level of lexicon and syntax on difference of predictability and choice.[114]

What changes in any move from the restricted to the elaborated code is the

amount that is taken for granted in and around a particular act of

communication; a language of restricted code will be deeply embedded in

the common familiarity of context shared by the interlocuters; that of the

elaborated code will be relatively free of this indexicality, little can be

assumed and much needs to be spelled out precisely and made verbal. Much of

the language on television is of this latter type; much of it is personal,

individual and able to express subtle differences. However it is the

argument now that the language of television and in particular the language

expressed in narrative and of narrative, is predominantly restricted.

Bernstein writes of the relationship between the restricted code and the social circumstances that both produce it and are created by it in the following way. It is a rich passage and it deserves to be quoted in full:

> "A restricted code will arise where the form of the social relation is based upon closely shared identifications, upon an extensive range of shared expectations, upon a range of common assumptions. Thus a restricted code emerges where the culture or sub-culture raises the "we" above "I". Such codes will emerge as both controls and transmitters of the culture in such diverse groups as prisons, the age group of adolescents, army, friends of long standing, between husband and wife. The use of a restricted code creates social solidarity at the cost of the verbal elaboration of individual experience. The type of social solidarity realised through a restricted code points towards mechanical solidarity, whereas the type of solidarity realised through elaborated codes points towards organic solidarity. The form of communication reinforces the form of the social relation rather than creating a need to create speech which uniquely fits the intentions of the speakers". [115]

What then is the social basis for the restriction of television's language? In natural language, Bernstein argues,this is fundamentally parochial. The paradigm is the primary group: the interaction crucially face-to-face. Yet the social context of television as I have already suggested is potentially at least,the complete society. If this is so then it may be possible to suggest that the restriction of television's code could be based on and at the same time generate what we could call national parochiality - or indeed in many ways an international parochiality. The notion of the global village generated by the electronic media of communication as postulated by Marshall McLuhan is a similar one, though whereas he stresses the totally synaesthetic experience generated by television and its instantaneity[116], I am suggesting that it is on the nature of the language that the argument can be based. Bernstein too, though in a different context, speculates on the presence of 'a' common culture shared by all members of a society and determined by the specific nature of the general codes or language at its syntactic or morphological levels.[117]

Let me summarize.   For Basil Bernstein the restricted code is generated

in social circumstances in which interaction is dependent on familiarity

and within which a great deal is shared.   His example is the long-married

husband and wife, where the intensity of communication is dependent as much

upon gesture, facial expression, the unsaid,as upon the specifically verbal.

The notion of the restricted code therefore implies not just restriction

at this level of syntax and lexical choice, but also in the nature of society,

and to the fact that the society is restricted in its extent.   It is the

latter, in a consideration of television, which needs qualification.   For it

is precisely in the generality of restriction that television operates.

Its codes, restricted when compared with other forms of communication,

assume and are assumed by members of the society who do in fact participate

in a culture a significant part of which, if only by virtue of television,

is indeed common.

Television cannot appeal to difference and to social and cultural

specificity because it has no or very little control over who will be party

to its communication.   It must therefore appeal, in both senses, to what is

shared albeit minimally by the widest possible group in society - in other

words by and to everyone.

What then is restricted about television's language?   It is necessary to

say first of all that it is the discourse of television that is the object

of consideration.   Television,as I have said,plays host to all manner of

speech both restricted and elaborated in Bernstein's sense.   To talk now

of television's language - more precisely of its communication - is not to talk

of the words and sentences that one hears but of the units of discourse, pre-

eminently of a narrative order, which are much larger than the sentence and

more full in the sense of comprising and being dependent on the image as well

as the spoken word. It is in the arrangement, the predictability of these

discursive units, that the restricted nature of television is grounded.

The purpose of subsequent chapters is to illustrate in what way this is so.

It will be enough to say now that it is on what has been called the

narrative structure of television, and by that I mean not just the

chronological but also the logical or non-linear structures of the texts,

that the argument rests.   Television's programmes are predictable/in terms
of the words or the events, details of content, but in the ways of their

display or ordering. They share this of course with other forms of

contemporary communication: some but not all films, comic-strips, popular

novels , novelettes, and so on[118].   What makes television so particular

in this regard is the intensity and consistency of this structuring, an

intensity dependent on the presence of the image and a consistency dependent

on the totality of its communication. Story telling is an archetypal form

of restricted communication[119] and television/is very little more than a

medium for the telling of stories. Indeed it tells its stories in ways

that are not new. The communication generated through the medium of

television is fundamentally an oral one. Although borrowing from and to

a degree still depending upon the tradition of literate communication, it

nevertheless opposes them.   In television the individuality of the written

word is transcended by the communality of the visual   and/or oral image.

This thesis is not a new one but it has I believe been insufficiently under-

stood and explored.[120] Marshall McLuhan in the brilliant haze of his writing

makes the point often and forcefully.   His work is studded with references

to and significantly depends upon this transformation which is the product

of the electronic as opposed to the mechanical.   For example, in Under-

standing Media he writes this:

"Our old industrialised areas, having eroded their oral
traditions automatically are in a position of having to
rediscover them, in order to cope with the electronic age."[121]

Television is central to this process:

"Television completes the cycle of the human sensorium. With
the omni-present ear and the moving eye, we have abolished writing,
the specialised acoustic and visual metaphor that established the
dynamics of Western civilisation"[122],

a quotation continued in Counterblast in the following grandiloquent way:

"We begin again to structure the primordial feelings and emotions
from which 3,000 years of literacy divorced us. We begin again
to live a myth"[123]

McLuhan's thesis, derived from the works of Harold Innes, and developed

variously in words and pictures, is that of a technological determinism in

which the nature of communication changes fundamentally with changes in the

technology of the transmission; the message is dependent on the medium.[124]

Accordingly such fundamental aspects of our perception, our notions of time

and space pre-eminently, are vulnerable to these changes. The languages th

each medium constructs for itself creates, in its idiosyncrasy, a particular

world. The written and then the printed word mark the first transformation

from an oral, communal, familiar and formulaic world into a literate,

individual, particular and linear one. The electronic media, by virtue of

their juxtaposition of sound and image, the speed and directness of their

communication, and the range of their reference have recreated the oral

world on a grand scale. We are in the midst, McLuhan would have us

believe, of a new perceptual revolution.

The argument distorted by fashion and blurred by excess is nevertheless

a cogent one. It has its echoes in recent work and in particular in that

of Jack Goody who refuses reasonably enough the monocausality of McLuhan's

efforts, indeed stressing literacy rather than printing as the primum mobile.

But nevertheless Goody remains quite firmly attached to the technological

and the technical.[125]

The distinction between the oral and the written is therefore an important
one and the role of different media in creating and sustaining one or the
other of these dominant forms of communication is central.

Two preliminary points ought to be made. Firstly it is by no means the case
that there is unanimity amongst students of language that there is any
difference between written and spoken language. Ferdinand de Saussure[126]
and Edward Sapir[127] for example both deny any significance to such differences;
writing to them is no more than an extension of speech and does not alter it
in any major way. Secondly there is no homology between the restricted and
the oral, as Bernstein in a footnote acknowledges[128]. Yet clearly as will
be seen, the characteristics which identify the distinctiveness of restricted
communication are broadly those belonging to oral communication; it is
unrecorded speech which depends most on context, the gesture and the glance.

Television is not written. The script of a play, a documentary or a news-
cast may be, but the performances is/an audio-visual experience which is immediate,
ephemeral and in a certain sense direct. Until very recently television was un-
recordable; it is still and will always be impossible to fully transcribe.
What then are the formal characteristics which identify it/as a predominantly
oral medium and what are the implications of such identification?

L. S. Vygotsky, in considering the development of language skills as
children grow up, makes the following basic distinction;

> "Written speech is a separate linguistic function, differing from oral
> speech in both structure and mode of functioning. Even its minimal
> development requires a high level abstraction. It is speech in thought
> and image only, lacking the musical, expressive, intonational qualities
> of oral speech. In learning to write, the child must disengage himself
> from the sensory aspect of speech and replace words by images of words."[129]

He goes on to stress that written speech requires deliberate analytical action

on the part of the child, that it is speech without an interlocutor addressed

to an absent or imaginary person, and that it represents therefore the mono-

logue; "oral speech, in most cases(represents), the dialogue."[130]

Following Vygotsky we might wish to suggest that television in terms of the

situation in which the communication is undertaken, is something of a hybrid.

It consists in a dialogue with an absent friend; on the one hand oral and on the

other written. Indeed there is no sense in which we need to insist on the

exclusively oral nature of television, for it is quite clear that any text

that television generates will borrow, at least for the time being, from

written texts and written culture. On the other hand even in terms of the

relative absence of the addressee the point has already been made that though

imaginary or unthinkable in his individuality the audience of television is

very real collectively. Television even here is more oral than literate and

significantly so.

Perhaps more central to the argument is the acknowledged capacity of written

speech and thought guided by writing to indulge in abstraction. Jack Goody,

both in his early paper with Ian Watt and later makes much of this distinction.[131]

> "The specific proposition is that writing, and more especially alphabetic
> literacy, made it possible to scrutinize discourse in a different kind of
> way by giving oral communication a semi-permanent form; this scrutiny
> favoured the increase in scope of critical activity, and hence rationality,
> scepticism and logic to resurrect memories of those questionable
> dichotomies".[132]

Writing is open to inspection, it can be analysed word for word, it can be

reviewed, re-read, skipped, examined out of context or in it.

"Speech is no longer tied to an 'occasion'; it becomes timeless. Nor is is attached to a person; on paper it becomes more abstract, more de-personalised.

Writing makes speech 'objective' by turning it into an object of visual as well as oral inspection; it is the shift of the receptor from ear to eye, of the producer from voice to hand." [133]

Writing brings with it, correlatively with its encouragement to abstract and to analyse, a reduction of any dependence on memory. The permanent replaces the impermanent, the list replaces the formula and history and geography become possible. [134] The ability to write is an ability to place once and for all events in their time and place and to establish chronology and geography. Writing generates its own time, non-reversible and linear, both in the form of its text and in the expression of its message. In oral culture history is replaced by myth and linear temporality by mythic harmony. Context is everything, memory fundamental and time might become as Edmund Leach suggests for the Greeks, [135] more of a pendulum than either a line or a circle. Jack Goody and Ian Watt make the point, and it is echoed, though transposed to a more relevant dimension for television by Marshall McLuhan. They write this:

"As long as the legendary and doctrinal aspects of the cultural tradition are mediated orally, they are kept in relative harmony with each other and with the present needs of society in two ways: through the un-conscious operations of memory and through the adjustments of the reciter's terms and attitudes to those in the audience before him". [136]

Marshall McLuhan on the other hand, or perhaps on the same hand, writes this:

"Just as history begins with writing so it ends with TV. Just as there was no living history when there was no linear time sense, so there is post history now when everything that ever was in the world becomes simultaneously present in our consciousness." [137]

What television denies therefore, ipso facto, is writing. If we are to accept something of these arguments, then we can also accept that television represents, in that denial, the unselfconscious orality of a preliterate age. It does so not of course, in its content; the content is contemporaneous and is different from that of the primitive and the preliterate as chalk from cheese, but in its form; and here the key notion is the formula.

The notion of the formula both literally and metaphorically implies a number of things. It is, first of all, to be opposed to the list as a way of recording, classifyingand memorising. The transition from oral to written culture is marked by the construction of lists and tables; objects are recognised, recorded and arranged - hierarchy,difference, identitybecome principles of classification. Writing brings with it in Michel Foucault's words a ""universal mathesis",[138] though for Foucault the former's relationship to'the latter goes unrecorded. But if the list brings with it abstraction and analysis then the formula brings with it immersion and synthesis. Above all the formula, in the context of the song, "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea",[139] allows the preliterate to communicate extendedly, poetically, dramatically, without help or hindrance of a written text. The performer, be he the teacher or the rhetorician, cannot learn by rote all that he has to communicate, nor does he by virtue of the demands of the performance accept or need the constraint of the static and fixed.[140] Its creativity and the novelty that emanates from that creativity is the product of his working through and with established units, metrical or narratively functional, which he can arrange or rearrange, to embroider or leave naked according to rules or even at will. The oral text is therefore fluid: it consists both of the familiar and the new: the familiar will in turn consist of motifs, formulae, accepted conventions, the new will be in the occasional but legitimate twist of plot or metre and also in the content.[141]

In order for an oral text to work it must do so within the constraints of memory and of concentration both of singer or performer and his audience. Performances for all their immediacy depend on *a priori* acceptance by all concerned of the rules of construction and context.[142] These rules in the

broadest sense are the rules of narrative, and of demonstration. As A.B.Lord points out for the Macedonian singer of tales: "Formulas and groups of formulas both large and small serve only one purpose. They provide a means for telling a story in song and verse. The tale's the thing". [143]

A. B. Lord's central concern is the demonstration of the role of the formulaic in the enormously extended songs of the folk tradition in Macedonia. The singers learn not whole songs, for some of them can be sung for an entire day or even longer, but units and rules for their construction. Singers, therefore, have the freedom to construct each time they are called upon to sing a new tale, but yet that tale is sufficiently familiar for them to be able to construct it satisfactorily and for the audience to follow it. "The (singer) builds his performance or song in our sense, on the stable skeleton of narrative, which is the song in his sense..... We must distinguish, then, two concepts of song in oral poetry. One is the general idea of the story, which we use when we speak in large terms, for example of the song of the wedding of the Smailagić Meho, which actually includes all singings of it . The other concept of song is that of a particular performance or text... "[144]

Narrative, therefore, the rules for the construction of tales, is central to the consideration of the oral tradition, and what it is for a text to be considered/as an oral one. This is not to say that written texts are not rule governed. But the strength of the rules governing a literary text are those principally of natural grammar,and in a different way,of genre and style. It is perfectly possible, and of course often the case, that a written text creates its own rules. But however "traditional", a written text is not dominated by the formula to the same degree or in the same way as an oral one. Those texts that do, a serial romance for example, preserve the oral forms albeit in a weakened way rather than articulating those peculiar to a written tradition.

There are now two points to be made. The first one is that much of our

contemporary culture is oral. Much if not most of our communication is

face-to-face. As Jack Goody and Ian Watt point out "For even within a

literate culture, the oral tradition - the transmission of values and

attitudes in face-to-face contact - nevertheless remains the primary mode

of cultural orientation, and, to varying degrees, it is out of step with

the various literate traditions."[145]   Proverbs, catch phrases, ritual

greetings and gestures, jokes, stories, slang are all part of our everyday

conversation.   They depend for their effectiveness on the acceptance of a

tradition and/ on appropriate context, albeit improverished when compared to

the supposed richness of pre-literate culture,by all those involved; and they

depend also on the full range of communication - visual, oral, even that of

touch and smell.   Television is no more than a magnification and a revital-

ization of this, the everyday culture of oral communication.   It is so

primarily because it is no longer written, and it does not communicate

fixed and infinitely recoverable texts.   Its communication, potentially

endless, like the songs of the Macedonians, consists in the eternal play

of the formula.   In drama, news and documentary success consists in the

grafting of the novel onto the familiar, and it is through the familiar

- the formula - that the experience of television is grounded in the

experience of the everyday.

The second point is the centrality of narrative in all of this.   The telling

of stories seems to be as centrally human as the speaking of language.   It

is not confined to an elite group of literati.   It is further and more funda-

mentally an oral expertise.   As Lord writes of the sung folktales of his

study: "The art of narrative song was perfected, and I use the word

advisedly, long before the advent of writing.   It had no need of stylus

or brush to become a complete artistic and literary medium."[146]   From the

simplicity of the "and then" copula which links in the telling two events

chronologically, to the elaborate forms of folktale and myth, tales are told according to conventions and rules. Like the rules of language these rules seem to differ less than one might expect. Roman Jakobson makes the point well: "According to the experience of modern linguistics, language patterns exhibit a consistent regularity. The languages of the whole world manifest a paucity and relative simplicity of structural type, and at the base of all these types lie universal laws. This schematic and recurrent character of linguistic patterns finds its explanation first of all in the fact that language is a typical collective property. Similar phenomena of schematism and recurrence in the structure of folktale throughout the world have long astonished and challenged investigators."[147] Television is supremely a story-telling medium; the structures that generate its texts, as I hope to illustrate in the following chapters, are significantly those of narrative. These narrative patterns are not the product of print technology, but pre-date it, and television in reaffirming them re-establishes the centrality of oral culture in our experience. Through the form of its communication it challenges and subverts the literacy of the last five hundred years.

There are two further aspects to this argument that I want, briefly, to consider now. The first is the collective nature of the oral tradition, and the second is its constraining nature.

The weakening of the oral tradition in the face of literacy and of printing involved a weakening of communality and of sub-culture.[148] The coming of literacy brought with it, paradoxically, both specialism and the breakdown of inter-cultural boundaries. It also, it has been suggested, brought with it nationalism.[149] The folk traditions expressed in symbolic or material culture were either incorporated and transformed or destroyed. What vitality they had, dependent as it was on the intensity of face to face interaction and immediate communication was increasingly denied by the

distance and delay of the written text.[150]

By virtue of the form and the extent of television's communication these traditions are being reasserted. Television's restricted codes, grounded in narrativity, and in the juxtaposition of sight and sound, as Bernstein argues for natural language raises the 'we above the I'. The paradox, as many commentators on the mass media have noted, is that the communality is generated at two removes: not only is the line of communication attenuated - Donald Horton and Richard Wohl called it para-social[151] - but the community is symbolically rather than physically expressed - it is the community of the independent and often otherwise socially isolated household. It is however nonetheless real for that.

This community is a folk community, a gemeinschaft, and it is both product and precondition of the restricted nature of televisual communication. This is, I admit, a fairly hazardous assertion, especially in view of much if not most of the thought on the nature of contemporary society which seeks to establish on the one hand its anonymity and its alienation or on the other the essentially ideological nature of just such pretentions to community. These claims, it is suggested, mask the true reality of conflict, contradiction and structural imbalance in capitalist society.[152] However, social and cultural experience is not monolithic and measures of culture's falsehood are risky to say the least. Arguments for cultural coherence are therefore not by definition spurious, though they must be carefully advanced. The precise nature of the community which television both proposes and supposes in its communication is still open to question, of course, but it is a question worthy of exploration and not to be dismissed out of hand.

There is one final dimension of this discussion of television as language to be considered. And that is its significance for constraint or control. Maurice Bloch in his consideration of ritual language and song asks the

question: "How is it that formalization can become a form of power or coercion?"[153]. In essence this is the question asked now, though any more complete answer, depending as it does on consideration of the relation between language and social structure, must await the final chapter. A number of considerations are therefore of relevance. Firstly we can acknowledge that language is itself powerful, in the sense underlying, for example, J.L. Austin's notion of its illocutionary force. Austin distinguishes between locution, illocution and perlocution as dimensions of communication through speech,both oral and written. Locution refers to what is said, illocution to what is done, and perlocution to what is achieved.[154] As Austin himself notes, the distinction between illocution and perlocution, is likely to become troublesome. The distinction rests on their relative conventionality. Illocutionary acts are conventional acts; perlocutionary acts are not conventional.[155] However, it is important to establish that language, acts of language use, do things as well as say things. In speaking we condemn, condone, inform, amuse and so on. Perhaps this is obvious. It is however, in the context of this argument, important. Communication is, among other things, a bid for control, and indeed some sociologists have taken this so much to heart that it has become the central issue of their work.[156]

But if language is, potentially at least, powerful, then it is also the case that some types of language are likely to be more powerful than others. It is here that questions of the form of language are of relevance, and it is here that the distinction between restricted and elaborated codes as formulated by Basil Bernstein is also relevant. Restricted forms of language, and by now we can include, I hope, among these, television's communication, constrain by virtue of their formalization what can be crudely called the right of reply.[157] This needs to be made more precise. Formal

language significantly restricts what can be said; communication through formal language, in its predictability, disqualifies the freedom that individuals have in language to create and to communicate idiosyncratically, originally or even, in a certain sense, genuinely.[158] As Maurice Bloch notes: "The formalization of speech therefore drastically restricts what can be said and the speech acts are neither all alike or all of a kind and thus if this mode of communication is adopted there is hardly any choice of what can be said.... (Formalization) leads to a specially stylized form of communication: polite, respectful, holy, but from the point of view of the creativity potential of language, impoverished."[159] Through formalization the response of a colloquent can be restricted or coerced. For Bloch the song is the extreme case of formalization and correspondingly of restriction. In the performance of a song, even the participants become an audience. They accept a pregiven form of communication, or perhaps non-communication, where significance is not in its detail or honesty but in its generality. Ritual communication, in its detachment from the specificity of vital interaction - both from intention or motives of the individual speakers (it is the role that speaks) and from its concrete location in a unique time and space - suffers from increasing ambiguity. This ambiguity is the ambiguity of the impossibility of logical response, rather than the result of deliberate incorporation of tropes to convey the complexity of implicit meaning.[160] As Bloch argues, "You cannot argue with a song".[161]

You can no more argue with a play or any closed narrative structure. Any demonstration therefore of this structure in television, myth or folktale involves as a necessary corollary the demonstration of the way in which that communication functions as a constraining force within the act of communication and the culture in general, and that this constraint is the product of the formal characteristics of language used or more broadly of the communication as a whole.

But we need to be careful. Formal language might well be considered,
as I have suggested, as a variety of restricted code. But it is, as it
were, a limited variety, for in many essentials its social significance
appears to be very different and is indeed contrary to what Bernstein
argues is central to the language of restriction.

Formal language is the product and guarantee of social hierarchy; it
constrains, certainly, but that constraint is positive for the communicator,
negative for his audience. It creates distance and perhaps masks that
distance by the play of the familiar in form, tone and content. Restricted
codes, on the other hand, are the producer and guarantee of social familiarity
- not the audience ,but the family, not the ritualised, but the everyday,,seem
to be its context. What constraint there is, is equally enforced on both
interlocutors and is equally enabling from the point of view of their
capacity to communicate with each other. In conflating both formal and
restricted as I have done in my description of the language of television,
I have run the risk of bringing together two apparent opposites in the guise
of identity. There is, however, method in the madness. It would appear
that something is left out of each of the accounts; for Bloch ignores or
chooses to underrate the community which even formal communication needs
in order to be effective and which it actually sustains - perhaps despite
itself - in its communication ,and Bernstein, equally, ignores or chooses
to underrate, while stressing the community, the fact that restricted codes
would tend to reify the inevitable hierarchy within social relationships,
however close. Bernstein and Bloch have chosen each to identifyor .stress
one necessary corollary of limited modes of expression - the former community,
the latter control. What I would want to suggest is that television's language
in its restriction generates both. Its formulae and in particular its
narrative structures generate both distance and familiarity; the society
that sustains its communication is similarly both out of reach and close
at hand; unequal structurally but more equal culturally. Television

in its language, articulates this tension and preserves it; the tension however is real, the product of the reality of both community and control.

In sum what I hope to have achieved in this chapter, both in theoretical discussion and demonstration, is that television's communication can be profitably considered from the point of view of language; and that the full range of questions asked about that language are relevant to television. I am not suggesting that television is a language, nor that narrative is its only dimension. Nor indeed am I suggesting that it is language's structure which should be the exclusive concern of any analysis of television. I am, however, suggesting that a consideration of the structure of the television message, as undertaken in chapters 5 and 6, will prove profitable, above all in pointing a way towards a more mature understanding of the role television plays in our contemporary culture.

Chapter 2. Footnotes and References

1. Edward Sapir, Language. New York. 1921. (London. 1949). p. 35.

2. Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics. New York.
    1959. p. 16: "A science that studies the life of signs within
    society is conceivable; it would be a part of social psychology
    and consequently of general psychology; I shall call it
    semiology (from Greek semeion, 'sign'). Semiology would show
    what constitutes signs, what laws govern them. Since the science
    does not yet exist, noone can say what it would be; but it has
    a right to existence, a place staked out in advance. Linguistics
    is only a part of the general science of semiology; the laws
    discovered by semiology will be applicable to linguistics,
    and the latter will circumscribe a well-defined area within the
    mass of anthropological data." c.f. Emile Durkheim, The Rules
    of Sociological Method. New York and London. 1964. p. 50.;
    and W. Doroszewski, Quelque Rémarques sur les Rapports de la
    Sociologie et de la Linguistique: Durkheim et F. de Saussure,
    Journale de Psychologie Normale et Pathologique. 1933. Vol. 30.
    82-91; and for an account of the history of structuralism see
    Jan M. Broekman, Structuralism. Moscow-Prague-Paris. The
    Hague. 1974.

3. On language's systematic nature see Emile Benveniste, Problems
    in General Linguistics. Coral Gables, Florida. 1971. p. 83:
    "The fundamental principle is that a language constitutes a
    system whose parts are all united in a relationship of solidarity
    and dependence. This system organises units which are the
    articulated signs, mutually differentiating and delimiting
    themselves. The structuralist doctrine teaches the predominance
    of the system over the elements and aims to define the structure
    of the system through the relationship among the elements, in the
    spoken chain as well as in formal paradigms and shows the organic
    character of the changes to which language is subject."

4. The arbitrariness of the sign is a central facet of Saussurean
    linguistics: op. cit. 65-70.

5. Consideration of such matters has been very largely the preserve
    of film studies up until now. Within the context of a semiotic
    study the work of Christian Metz (see below) has been seminal;
    see especially Screen. Spring/Summer Vol. 15 1/2. 1973, and
    subsequent issues. On the complexity of the codes of the
    television image, see Umberto Eco, Towards a Semiotic Inquiry
    into the Television Message. Working Papers in Cultural Studies.
    3. 1972. 103-121.

6. Classically, of course, and in the broadest sense, the 'who says
    what to whom' model is linguistic, see H.D. Lasswell, The
    Structure and Function of Communication in Society, in W. Schramm,
    Mass Communications. Urbana. 1960. 117-130; but more recent
    neo-semiotic attempts can be found in John Fiske and John Hartley,
    Reading Television. London. 1978; Robert Hodge, Linguistics and
    Popular Culture, in C.W.E. Bigsby, Approaches to Popular Culture.
    London. 1976. 107-128. Neither of these two efforts is, I might
    add, particularly impressive.

7. Emile Benveniste. op. cit. p. 24-5.

8. See, for example, Ian Robinson's perceptive comments on the work
    of Noam Chomsky. The New Grammarian's Funeral. Cambridge.
    1975. esp. p. 103.

9. Language and community are coexistent; see for example, Benjamin
    Lee Whorf, Language, Thought and Reality. Cambridge, Mass. 1956.
    p. 212.; S.I. Hayakawa, Language in Thought and Action. London.
    1965. p. 14. Ferdinand de Saussure op. cit.; James A. Boon, From
    Symbolism to Structuralism. New York and London. 1972. p. 92.;
    Jurgen Habermas, Hans-Peter Dreitzel. op. cit.

10. For a Marxist theory of language see V.N. Volosinov, Marxism and
    the Philosophy of Language. New York. 1973., and compare it
    with, esp. Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms.
    New Haven and London. Vol. 1. 1953; c.f. Edmund Leach,
    Anthropological Aspects of Language: Animal Categories and
    Verbal Abuse, in E.H. Lenneberg, New Directions in the Study of
    Language. Cambridge, Mass. 1964. 23-36. p. 36: "Language
    then does more than provide us with a classification of things;
    it actually moulds our environment; it places each individual
    at the centre of a social space, which is ordered in a logical
    and reasoning way."

11. The notion of Language system is borrowed from Christian Metz,
    see below pp. 57

12. For a history of linguistics, see Helgar Pedersen, Linguistic
    Science in the Nineteenth Century. Cambridge, Mass. 1931;
    and see also George Steiner, After Babel. Oxford. 1975.;
    Ernst Cassirer, Structuralism in Modern Linguistics. Word.
    Vol. 1. No. II. August 1945. 99-120; Noam Chomsky, Cartesian
    Linguistics. New York. 1966.

13. For a discussion of de Saussure, see this chapter, below.

14. There are many strands to this view of language, from Ludwig
    Wittgenstein to John Searle; see inter alia. Ludwig Wittgenstein,
    Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. London 1961; idem. Philosophical
    Investigations. Oxford. 1962; idem. Philosophical Papers.
    Oxford. 1970; and especially John R. Searle's review
    of the work of Noam Chomsky, Chomsky's Revolution in Linguistics.
    New York Review of Books. Vol. XVIII, No. 12. June 29th 1972.
    16-24.

15. On the notion of indexicality, see Harold Garfinkel, Studies in
    Ethnomethodology. Englewood Cliffs. 1967. esp. Ch. 1.;
    Harold Garfinkel and Harvey Sacks, On Formal Structures of
    Practical Actions, in J.C. McKinney and E.A. Tiryakin (Eds.)
    Theoretical Sociology: Perspectives and Developments. New York.
    1970. 337-366; and for some criticisms of a formal logic of
    language and symbol, see Ian Robinson, op. cit.; Jonathan Culler,
    Structural/Poetics. London. 1975. esp. Ch. 4.

16. Andre Martinet. Elements of General Linguistics. London. 1964.
    (2nd ed. 1969) p. 28: "A language is an instrument of communication
    in virtue of which human experience is analysed differently in each
    given community into units, the monemes, each endowed with a semantic
    content and a phonic expression. The phonic expression is articulated
    in its turn into distinctive and successive units. These are the
    phonemes, of limited number, in each language; their nature and mutual
    relations differing from one language to another."

17. For example: Zellig S. Harris, Discourse Analysis. Language.
    Vol. 28. 1952. 1-30; A.J. Greimas, Sémantique Structurale.
    Paris. 1966; see also Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of
    Knowledge. London. 1972. see also Christian Metz, Film Language.
    New York. 1974. 84-90.

18. Emile Benveniste. op. cit. p. 110

19. See Chapter 4 below where I discuss the work of Vladimir Propp,
    A.J. Greimas and Claude Lévi-Strauss; but see also, Tzvetan
    Todorov, La Grammaire du Récit. Langages. Vol. 12. 1968. 94-102:
    idem. Grammaire du Décameron. The Hague.1969.; Gerald Prince,
    A Grammar of Stories. The Hague. 1973.

20. Grammaire du Décameron. op. cit. p. 15: "La grammaire universelle
    est alors la source de tous les universaux et elle nous donne
    la définition même à l'homme. Non seulement toute les langues
    mais aussi toutes les systèmes signifiants obeissant à la même
    grammaiŗs. Elle est universelle non seulement parce qu'elle est
    répondue dans toutes les langues de l'univers, mais parce qu'elle
    concide avec la structure de l'univers lui-même."

21. Ernst Cassirer, Le Langage et la Construction du Monde des Objets.
    Journal de Psychologie Normale et Pathologique. Vol. 30. 1933.
    18-44. p. 40.

22. For a summary discussion see C.R. Badcock, Lévi-Strauss. Structuralism
    and Sociological Theory. London. 1975.

23. Ernst Cassirer. op. cit. p. 44

24. W. Doroszewski. op. cit.; Jonathan Culler, Saussure. London.
    1976.

25. Ferdinand de Saussure. op. cit. p.11.

26. ibid. 101 ff.

27. ibid. 111 ff.

28. ibid. 9-11.

29. ibid. 14.

30. ibid. 15.

31. ibid. 135-7.

32. Noam Chomsky, Language and Mind. New York. 1972; Reflections
    on Language. London. 1975.

33. Ferdinand de Saussure. op. cit. 66.

34. ibid. 52.

35. ibid. 66 ff.

36. ibid. 98.

37. cf. Joseph Vachek, The Linguistic School of Prague. Bloomington. 1966, where he makes the point (26/7) that this fixity is, by virtue of the 'ever present structural weakness' of language, not in any sense final or complete.

38. de Saussure. op. cit. 70.

39. ibid. 120.

40. ibid. 121

41. ibid. 123.

42. Jan M. Broekman, op. cit.; Joseph Vachek, op. cit.; Frederic Jameson, The Prison House of Language. Princeton. 1972.; Roman Jakobson, Six Lectures on Sound and Meaning. Sussex. 1978. esp. p. 41 ff.

43. Noam Chomsky, op. cit.; idem, Syntactic Structures. The Hague. 1957.

44. Chomsky refers to questions of semantics in Syntactic Structures. op. cit. Ch. 9., Language and Mind op. cit. 59-60., Reflections on Language. op. cit. 94 ff. There are clearly problems, even at the level of syntax, in the assumption that a particular form is grammatical, and such judgements are necessarily the results of unstated assumptions about the 'sense' of a particular utterance and its preconditions. The literature following and developing Jerrold Fodor and Jerry A. Katz's early paper, The Structure of a Semantic Theory. Language. XXXIX No. 2. 1963. 170-210, is voluminous and complex.

45. Louis Hjelmslev, Prolegomena to a Theory of Language. Madison. 1963. pp. 78-9.

46. ibid. p. 141 ff.

47. Umberto Eco, A Theory of Semiotics. London. 1977. p. 55.

48. Roland Barthes, Elements of Semiology. London. 1967. p. 90.

49. Umberto Eco, op. cit. p. 56.

50. Roland Barthes, op. cit. p. 91.

51. ibid. p. 89 ff. and idem. Mythologies. London. 1972.

52. Louis Hjelmslev. op. cit. 127.

53. There are, of course, a number of impressionistic studies in the semiotics of television, and a number also of suggestions as to how it might be done; among them see: Ashley Pringle, A Methodology for Television Analysis with Reference to the Drama Series. Screen. 13.2. Summer 1972. 116-128; Umberto Eco, Towards a Semiotic Inquiry into the Television Message. op. cit.; John Fiske and John Hartley, op. cit.; see also: Stuart Hall, Ian Connell and Lidia Curti, The Unity of Current Affairs Television. Working Papers in Cultural Studies. 9. Spring 1976. 51-93; Stephen Heath and Gillian Skirrow. Television, a World in Action. Screen. Summer 1977. Vol. 18. 2. 7-60; David Morley and Charlotte Brundsden. op. cit.

54. Christian Metz, Language and Cinema. The Hague. 1974. p. 235 ff.

55. see below pp. 57.

56. ibid. p. 235.

57. ibid. p. 239.

58. cf. Stephen Heath, The Work of Christian Metz. Screen. Autumn 1973. Vol. 14. 3. esp. p. 9/10.

59. op. cit. p. 236.; cf. Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore. War and Peace in the Global Village. New York . 1968. p. 126.

60. Christian Metz, Film Language. New York and London. 1974. 16-28.

61. Sergei Eisenstein, Film Form. London. 1951.; The Film Sense. London. 1968 (first published 1943); Film Essays. London. 1968.

62. op. cit. 75 ff.; see also Andrew Tudor, Image and Influence. London. 1974. esp. Ch. 5. for a discussion of the work of Christian Metz and the notion of film language.

63. op. cit. p. 48-58.

64. ibid. p. 50.

65. ibid. p. 52.; cf. Victor Shklovsky: "The outside world is for the painter not the content, but merely material for his painting." (Literatua i Kinematografi. p. 5.) quoted by Victor Erlich, Russian Formalism. The Hague. 1965. p. 189.

66. Christian Metz. op. cit. 97 ff.

67. Christian Metz, Methodological Propositions for the Analysis of Film. Screen. Vol. 14. 1/2. 89-109. 1973.

68. Christian Metz, Film Language. Oxford University Press. 1974. 145.

69. R. Arnheim, Film as Art. London. 1958; B. Balasz, Theory of Film. London. 1952; Andre Bazin, What is Cinema? Berkely 2 Vols. 1967 and 1972; H. Blumer, Movies and Conduct. New York. 1933; Cahiers du Cinéma. Paris; G. Cohen-Seat, Essai sur les principes d'une philophée du Cinéma. Paris. 1946; S. Eisenstein, The Film Sense. London. 1968; idem. Film Form. London. 1957; L. Jacobs, The Rise of the American Film. New York. 1939; S. Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler. Princeton. 1947; idem., Theory of Film. New York. 1965; Jean Mitry, Esthetique et Psychologie du Cinema. Paris. 2 Vols. 1963, 1965; Edgar Morin, Le cinéma ou l'homme imaginaire. Paris. 1956; P.P. Pasolini, Pasolini on Pasolini, O. Stack (ed.). London. 1969; Raymond Spottiswoode, A Grammar of Film. London. 1935; Martha Wolfenstein and Nathan Leites, Movies. A Psychological Study. Glencoe. 1950; Thorrold Dickinson, A Discovery of Cinema. London. 1971.

70. cf. Roland Barthes, The Structuralist Activity, in idem. Critical Essays. Evanston. 1973. 213-220.

71. Language and Cinema. op. cit. p. 73.

72. ibid. p. 22. The present discussion of television and
    certainly the analysis presented in chapters 5 and 6, is not
    informed so clearly by this distinction, precisely because
    I am not concerned directly with identifying the specificity
    of television.

73. Language and Cinema. op. cit. p. 35.

74. ibid. p. 242.

75. ibid. 61-70, 79-83, 127-30, 136-47, 224-234, 245-250, 267-271.

76. ibid. p. 207.: "A system of signification is not only a system
    of signs; units larger or smaller than the sign play a considerable
    role in it; the 'level of the sign' should not be isolated from
    the others. This is one more reason...for not linking the study
    of the distinctive units of the film to the exclusive search for
    the cinematic sign."

77. Christian Metz, Essais sur la Signification au Cinema. Vol. 1.
    Paris. 1963. (translated as Film Language. op. cit. in which
    see Ch. 3. The Cinema: Language or Language System?), and Vol. 2.
    Paris. 1972.

78. Christian Metz. Problèmes de Denotation dans le film de Fiction.
    Contribution à Une Sémiologie du Cinema. in A.J. Greimas, (Ed.)
    Sign, Language, Culture. The Hague. 1970. 403-413. p. 403.

79. Stephen Heath. op. cit. notes that Metz subsequently acknowledges
    (Semiologie/Linguistique/Cinema. Cinethique. 6. Jan/Feb. 1970)
    that this analogical relationship is not a simple one, and
    obscures the various ways in which analogy itself is structured,
    the various ways in which significance and perception are themselves
    coded. However the main point is clear. Signification in the
    cinema, spoken words apart, is linked to perceptions of the
    world in a way which the signification of natural language is not.
    It is in this sense that signification in the cinema is motivated
    and not arbitrary.

80. Film Language. op. cit. 61.

81. ibid. 66.

82. op. cit.

83. op. cit. p. 405

84. ibid.

85. Film Language. op. cit. 69. my italics.

86. ibid. p. 95.

87. ibid. 98-99.

88. ibid. 101. It is of course the question of the specificity of
    filmic narrativity that this thesis, if only by implication,
    would seek to challenge; filmic narrativity, like televisual
    narrativity is not a sui generis phenomenon.

89. Film Language. ibid. Ch. 5. 108-146.

90. Note that this is a longer version of Problèmes de Dénotation
    dans le Film de Fiction. op cit. and contains the diagram
    of the grande syntagmatique; the shorter version contains an
    important qualification which the longer does not; p. 410.
    "Ce tableau s'applique au cinema de l'époque 'classique' (1935-50
    environ). Pour le cinema 'moderne', il avait besoin d'être
    revis (=travail en cours, non encore terminé).

91. Film Language. op. cit. 18/19.

92. ibid. 26.

93. ibid. 145. "The fact that must be understood is that films are
    understood. Iconic analogy alone cannot account for the
    intelligibility of the co-occurrences in filmic discourse. That
    is the function of the large syntagmatic category."

94. ibid. 146., but see his qualification in Problèmes de Dénotation
    op. cit. 411. "La grande syntagmatique du cinéma n'est pas
    immuable; elle a sa diachronie. Elle évolue nettement plus vite
    que les langues, circonstances qui est due à ce que l'ART et
    le LANGAGE s'interpenetrent beaucoup plus au cinema que dans le
    domaine du verbal...La grande syntagmatique du cinema n'en
    constitue pas moins une codification que est cohérente dans
    chaque état synchronique." I have, indeed, found it necessary
    to extend the grande syntagmatique in the analysis of the
    programmes of Intimate Strangers. See Appendix 1

95. see fn. 89 above. and Film Language. 185-227. and see also
    Manuel Alvarado and John Caughie, Metz' Grande Syntagmatique
    and Tout va Bien. Notes and Findings. S.E.F.T. Mimeo. Undated.

96. Film Language. op. cit. 149-182.

97. see Appendix, where an analysis of one episode of Intimate
    Strangers, following the Metzian classification, is presented.
    The significance of this, potentially at least, is to demonstrate
    the relation between the structure of the expression of a
    contemporary play and that of the film of the classic type. It
    also allows a way of illustrating difference of genre identifiable
    in the relative complexity of construction of a text, or the
    relative dominance of one or more of the particular type of
    units within the framework as a whole.

98. See Appendix 1. and fn. 94 above.

99. see fn. 94 above. and Problèmes de Dénotation. op. cit. 411 ff.

100. Film Language. op. cit. p. 142.

101. Problèmes de Dénotations dans le Film de Fiction. op. cit. 413.

102. Basil Bernstein, Class, Codes and Control. Vol. 1. London. 1971.
     Basil Bernstein begins with a notion of public communication and
     then subsequently redefines it to take into account notions of
     lexical and syntactic predictability, and differential relationship
     to social structure. The original term public, is useful here
     because it relates to the relative indiscriminate nature of the
     communication and what Bernstein calls its 'we'-ness. See below
     pp. 71.

103. Benjamin Lee Whorf, <u>Language, Thought and Reality</u>. Cambridge, Mass. 1956; and see Basil Bernstein. <u>op. cit.</u> p. 121-3.

104. <u>ibid.</u> 173-4: "...I shall take the view that the code which the linguist invents to explain the formal properties of the grammar is capable of generating any number of speech codes, and there is no reason for believing that any one language code is better than another in this respect. On this argument, language is a set of rules to which all speech codes must comply, but which speech codes are realised is a function of the culture acting through social relationships in specialised contexts. Different speech forms or codes symbolise the form of the social relationship, regulate the nature of the speech encounter and create for the speakers different orders of relevance and relation."

105. Among others, though centrally, see William Lavov, The Logic of Non-Standard English, in Nell Keddie (Ed.), <u>Tinker, Taylor.. The Myth of Cultural Deprivation</u>. Harmondsworth. 1973. 21-66; Harold Rosen, <u>Language and Class</u>. Bristol. 1972; and see the summaries of Michael Stubbs, <u>Language, Schools and Classrooms</u>, London, 1976.; Peter Trudgill, <u>Sociolinguistics</u>. Harmondsworth. 1974.

106. Bernstein. <u>op. cit.</u> p. 43. In an early paper he writes: "Language is considered one of the most important means of initiating, synthesizing and <u>reinforcing</u> ways of thinking, feeling and behaviour which are functionally related to the social group. It does not, of itself, prevent the expression of specific ideas or confine the individual to a given level of conceptualisation, but certain ideas and generalisations are facilitated rather than others. That is the language use facilitates development in a particular direction rather than inhibiting all other possible directions."

107. cf. Anthony Smith, <u>The Shadow in the Cave</u>. London. 1976. esp. Ch. 1.

108.   see fn. 2 Chapter 1.

109. see especially Salvador Giner, <u>Mass Society</u>. London. 1976.

110. Bernstein. <u>op. cit.</u> 42-3 and ff.

111. <u>ibid.</u> p. 32.

112. see for example: Marshall McLuhan, <u>Counterblast</u>. London. 1970. p. 124.; Christian Metz, <u>Film Language</u>. <u>op. cit.</u>; David Riesman, <u>The Oral Tradition, the Written Word and the Screen Image</u>. Antioch. 1956. p. 37.

113. R.P. Kolker and J. Douglas Ousley. <u>op. cit.</u> p. 391.

114. Bernstein. <u>op. cit.</u> 125-9.

115. <u>ibid.</u> 146/7.

116. Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media. London. 1964; idem. Verbi-Voco-Visual Explorations. New York. 1967; idem. with Quentin Fiore. War and Peace in the Global Village. New York. 1968; idem. The Medium is the Message. New York. 1967; see also Edmund Carpenter. Oh, What a Blow that Phantom Gave Me! London. 1976.

117. Bernstein, op. cit. 123; cf. Dennis McQuail, Towards a Sociology of Mass Communication. op. cit. p. 76:"It seems now possible to conclude that in the 'age of television', industrial society does have something like a common culture which is that provided by the entertainment media. Thus the problem posed by the existence of ma-s culture may not be one of the rejection of education and literacy by the masses, or their exploitation by the few, but may arise from the existence of needs common to most members of industrial society and catered for in many ways made possible by the technology of mass communications."

118. cf. Richard Hoggart, Speaking to Each Other. Harmondsworth. 1973 (Vol. 1.) p. 141. and Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media. op. cit.; see also the papers presented in W. Arens and Susan P. Montague. The American Dimension. New York. 1976; and also Claude Lévi-Strauss' comments on the serial romance in The Origin of Table Manners. London. 1978 p. 129-31.; and Ellen S. Rhoads. Little Orphan Annie and Claude Lévi-Strauss. Journal of American Folklore. 1973. Vol. 86. 345-357.

119. Bernstein. op. cit. 126 and below.

120. see below pp. 75 ; the transition from preliterate to literate, and from manuscript to printing is becoming an increasing topic for consideration; see Jack Goody, fn. 125 below, and also the work of Elizabeth Eisenstein, Some Conjectures about the Impact of Printing on Western Society and Thought. Journal of Modern History. 1968. Vol. 40. 1-56 and her recent, The Printing Press as an Agent of Change. 2 Vols. Cambridge. 1979.

121. Understanding Media. op. cit., p. 27.

122. The Medium is the Message. op. cit. 125-6.

123. Counterblast. op. cit. 17.

124. see Harold Innis, esp. The Bias of Communication. Toronto. 1951 (reprinted 1973), and idem., Empire and Communication. Toronto. 1972. On McLuhan: Donald Theall, The Medium is the Rear View Mirror. Montreal. 1971; Gerald Emanuel Stearn (Ed.), McLuhan Hot and Cool. Harmondsworth. 1968; Jonathan Miller, McLuhan. London. 1971.

125. Jack Goody, The Domestication of the Savage Mind. Cambridge. 1977; Jack Goody and Ian Watt, The Consequences of Literacy. Comparative Studies in Society and History. Vol. V. No. 3. April 1963. 304-345; Jack Goody, Literacy, Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge, in Joseph Ben-David and Terry Nicholas Clark, Culture and its Creators. Chicago. 1977.

126. Course in General Linguistics. op. cit. 23-4.

127. Language. op. cit. 20.

128. Class, Codes and Control. Vol. 1. op. cit. p. 56.

129. Lev. S. Vygotsky, Thought and Language. Cambridge, Mass. 1962. 98.

130. ibid. p. 142

131. see footnote 125 above.

132. The Domestication of the Savage Mind. op. cit. 37.

133. ibid. p. 46. and cf. Patricia M. Greenfield, Oral or Written
     Language: The Consequences for Cognitive Development in Africa,
     The United States and England. Language and Speech. 1972. Vol. 15.
     169-178. esp. p. 176.

134. The Consequences of Literacy. op. cit. 321.

135. Edmund Leach, Two Essays concerning The Symbolic Representation
     of Times in idem. Rethinking Anthropology. London. 1961. 124-136;
     see also Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms. op. cit.;
     Harold Innis, op. cit.

136. The Consequences of Literacy. op. cit. 84.

137. Counterblast. op. cit. 84.

138. Michel Foucault, The Order of Things. London. 1970.

139. Albert B. Lord, The Singer of Tales. Cambridge, Mass. 1960.
     p.4. and see also idem. The Influence of a Fixed Text in To
     Honor Roman Jakobson. Vol. II. Janua Linguarium. Series Major.
     The Hague. 32. 1967. 1198-1206.

140. cf. E.R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages.
     Bollingen. Series XXXIV. New York. 1953. and Robert Weiman,
     Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theatre. Baltimore.
     1978.

141. cf. Jack Goody op. cit.; A.B. Lord, op. cit. p. 20.

142. There is a discussion, of course, especially in folklore studies
     about the significance of the performance in understanding, making
     sense of, the oral communication, see especially: Dan Ben-Amos
     and Kenneth Goldstein, Folklore, Performance and Communication.
     The Hague. 1975.

143. The Singer of Tales. op. cit. 68.

144. ibid. 99-100.

145. The Consequences of Literacy. op. cit. 336.

146. The Singer of Tales. op. cit. 124.; cf. William Labov and
     Joshua Waletsky. op. cit.

147. Roman Jakobson, On Russian Fairy Tales in Michael Lane (ed.) Structuralism. A Reader. London. 1970. 191.

148. The Domestication of the Savage Mind. op. cit. 142.

149. Marshall McLuhan, The Gutenberg Galaxy. London. 1962. esp. 199; idem. Understanding Media. op. cit.; Eisenstein, op. cit.

150. Jack Zipes. Breaking the Magic Spell. London. 1979.

151. Donald Horton and Richard K. Wohl, Mass Communication and Para-Social Interaction. Psychology. XIX August 1956. Vol. 3. 215-229.

152. cf. Alan F. Blum, Popular Culture and the Image of Gesellschaft. Studies in Public Communication. 1961. Vol. 3. 145-155. These issues will be discussed more fully in Chapter 7.

153. Maurice Block, Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation. European Journal of Sociology. XV. 1974. 1. 55-81. p. 60.

154. J.L. Austin, How to do Things with Words. Oxford. 1962. p. 110.

155. ibid. p. 121.

156. The range of studies that might be characterised as Ethnomethodology is enormous - from conversational analysis to metaphysical theorising, see Harold Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology. op. cit.; Jack Doublas, (Ed.), Understanding Everyday Life. London. 1971; Roy Turner (Ed.), Ethnomethodology. Harmondsworth. 1974; and for a recent review, Paul Attewell, Ethnomethodology since Garfinkel, Theory and Society. 1. 1974. 179-210.

157. There is of course no equation here between restricted codes and formal language; restricted codes are not necessarily formal, though formal language is necessarily restricted.

158. cf. Jurgen Habermas, Toward a Theory of Communicative Competence. op. cit.

159. Bloch. op. cit. p. 62.

160. cf. Sir William Empson. Seven Types of Ambiguity. Harmondsworth. 1961.

161. op. cit. 71.

CHAPTER III

The Mythic and Television

There is very little that is novel in the suggestion that television and
other aspects of contemporary culture are like myths.[1] Most often the
argument that they are is a functional one; myths and television fulfil
the same purpose or satisfy the same needs, be they individual or social.
Often too it is argued that myths and the products of contemporary culture
are similar in their form and their content; they convey similar messages
in similar ways.

What most of these considerations obscure is the very real difficulty in
identifying what myths are. The supposed comparison of like with like
ignores the fact that it is not just, for example, television, which is
partially understood, but that the supposed key to the puzzle is itself
amorphous. Myth, ritual, magic, folktales, indeed the whole panoply of
a supposedly different and distinct way of thinking, acting and communicating
- the assumed preserve of 'primitive' pre-literate societies and cultures -
have so far denied us their essence.[2] This denial is the product both of
the manifestly enormous range of words and acts that we might wish to
include under a common rubric, but it is also the product of the problems
associated with any cross-cultural comparison, particularly those concerned
with the transferability of our own categories of thought beyond their
normal range of relevance.[3]

I would like in this chapter to attempt a draft of the equation of television
and the mythic, and to do so in a way which would avoid, hopefully, the
worst excesses of either claims for a general theory or of a refusal to be clear
about the nature of the terms of the comparison. Such a comparison, I would
suggest, is a fruitful one. Indeed more than that, I would maintain that

unless the mythical dimension of contemporary culture is recognized and understood then perceptions of that culture will remain - if such a thing is possible - both equivocal and banal.

This chapter, therefore, will consist of three parts: firstly and inevitably a consideration of some of the most influential theories of myth and ritual - a consideration which, for reasons of space and competence - will be relatively synoptic; secondly an identification of in what, minimally a definition of the mythic should consist; and thirdly a consideration of the role mythic thought might have in contemporary culture.

But first, and as in the preceding chapter, a simple but important distinction needs to be made. Television, as indeed all other forms of mass communication, uses specific items of folklore, myth and represent- ations of ritual within its discourse. This has been noted and it is noteworthy.[4] Advertisements, questions in quiz shows, the retelling of the familiar tales and the broadcasting of a state opening of parliament or a coronation, all illustrate the various ways in which aspects of traditional culture are preserved in our own. However, just as we can consider television as a language or language system in the acknowledgement of the obvious point that a significant part of its communication is in spoken language, so too can we at least suggest that the television message as a whole can be considered as mythic, irrespective of any specific item of content.

II

Theories of myth are amenable to no simple classification. Indeed as for example G.S. Kirk points out respect for the great differences between cultures in the form, content and context of mythical communication demands that no one theory will be adequate, though each may have something of value to say.[5] Percy Cohen, equally, eschews synthesis, though he does produce a definition, and ends by listing seven types of theory.[6] Nevertheless

despite this situation, which is after all an endemic one in the human

and social sciences, the attempt must be made, if only as a means of

presenting a great deal of conflicting and contradictory theory in a short

space.

We can therefore begin by making an initial distinction between those

theories which seek to establish a distinct form of thought whose central

and seminal expression is in myth, and those theories which wish to relate

the particular activity of the narration of myth to other aspects of

individual or social existence, for example, magic or ritual.[7] Among

the former we can make a further distinction, between those who see myth as

an expression of feeling and those who see it as an expresion of thought.

For the first, above all for Ernst Cassirer, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl and

Mircea Eliade,[8] myth is unashamedly primitive, and its primitiveness is

grounded in the proximity of man to nature and to the supernatural, and

in the recognition of, and response to, the power of this otherwise unmediated

reality. Myths are essentially sacred. They are believed and they

accurately reflect the ways in which the primitive perceives his world.

Opposing this view with a theory that stresses the intellectual coherence

within myth is, of course, Claude Lévi-Strauss.[9] For him myth has

nothing to do with emotions, and its relationship to the sacred is

incidental. Concerned to establish a mode of thought through the analysis

of myth, that mode of thought gains its coherence not in the uniqueness of

primitive experience, but in the capacity of all men to think equally well;

in other words ultimately in the structure of the human mind. Myth for

Lévi-Strauss is as close as one can get to pure thought[10], and though

the argument is not without its difficulties, the difference between the

primitive and his myth and ourselves without it is more a matter of content

and of history than anything as fundamental as the denial of emotion.[11]

For Cassirer, Lévy-Bruhl and Eliade, though again not without qualification

as I shall argue, it is man at a particular stage of his evolutionary

development which is the centre of concern;   for Lévi-Strauss it is man

tout court.   :

Let me briefly consider each of these theories in turn.

Ernst Cassirer sees myth as the expression of the life-force of the human

spirit at a particular stage of its development;   it is its power, its

urgency and its emotional charge which give it is distinctiveness.

Mythical thought is not logical;   the connections it makes between things,

indeed its very categories, reflect and perpetuate the coherence of a

felt unity in ,and of, the world.   As Suzanne Langer succinctly puts it;

> "All mythic constructions are symbols of value - of life
> and power, or of violence, evil and death.   They are charged
> with feeling, and have a way of absorbing into themselves
> more and more intense meanings, sometimes even logically
> conflicting imports.   Therefore mythic symbols do not give
> rise to discursive understanding;   they do beget a kind of
> understanding, but not by sorting out concepts and relating
> them in a distinct pattern;   they tend, on the contrary,
> merely to bring together great complexes of cognate ideas, [12]
> in which all distinctive features are merged and swallowed."

Myth rolls up everything it touches, "Things which come into contact

with one another in a mythical sense - whether this contact is taken as a

spatial or temporal contiguity or as a similarity, however remote, or a

membership in the same class or species - have fundamentally ceased to be

a multiplicity;   they have acquired a substantial unity."[13]   This vision

of the childhood of man is incidentally give some empirical support by

Peter Worsley when he, following L.S. Vygotsky's work on the childhood of

men, opposes Lévi-Straussian structuralism with evidence of alternative

forms of classification in the totemism of the Groote Eylandters.[14]

Cassirer's vision, for as G.S. Kirk points out[15] Cassirer knew no more

than anyone else about how myths actually are or were created, stems from

a philosophical position, derived from Emanuel Kant which seeks to

establish the construction of symbols as the central activity of man.

The symbolic world, of which myth together with language, is both a part

but also the source, mediates between object and mind. Myths grow out

of man's experience of the world, and that experience is both concrete

and undifferentiated, above all because both object and its signification

are bonded together. There is no difference between the thing and its

image.[16] There is no consciousness in mythical thought of thought as such,

no abstraction nor conceptual manipulation. In a curious way myth is

pre-symbolic. The world is believed in and it gains its sacredness in

that belief and in the recognition of its power.

The categories through which the mythic world is ordered grow out of this

emotional bonding with the world.[17] Space and time, number and

causality are grounded in the profound separation of the sacred and

the profane and in the emotional response to that separation.[18] Indeed

spatial differentiation is basic to mythical thought: "The barriers which

man sets himself in his basic feeling of the sacred are the starting point

from which begins his setting of boundaries of space and from which by a

progressive process of organization and articulation, the process spreads

over the whole of the physical cosmos."[19] Absolute and unchanging mythic time,

and magical and powerful number derive from the same essential dichotomy.

In a sense Cassirer wants, despite this stress on the spirit, on emotion

and on the sacred, to have it both ways, for he is insisting at the same

time on an underlying structural form which gives unity to what otherwise might be

thought as potentially entirely arbitrary emotional responses and fantasies.

"The mythical fantasy drives towards animation, towards

a complete spiritualization of the cosmos, but the mythical form of thought

which attaches all qualities and activities, all states and relations to a

solid foundation, leads to the opposite extreme, a kind of materialization

of spiritual contents".[20]

And this contradiction is re-emphasised when he faces Lévy-Bruhl's theory

of the prelogical, and towards what Cassirer wrongly assumes to be the

former's absolute dichotomy of primitive and modern.[21]   For here Cassirer

is arguing for a continuity in some, the profane, aspects of human existence,

a continuity which in fact is nowhere provided for in his theory.

It is tempting to deny Cassirer's mythical speculations in their entirety,

either on empirical grounds: not all myths seem to depend on emotion for

their creation and maintenance; or on logical and philosophical grounds:

that he is both contradictory and as M.F. Ashley-Montague points out that

he never faces his true object: "he is not interested in mythology as such but

in the processes of consciousness which lead to the creation of myth."[22]

It is tempting too, to reject his crude evolutionism wherein myth is

always negatively valued when faced with its developments, religion and

science.

Three things can be plausibly extracted however. The first is the

recognition of the emotional content of myth. This need not be interpreted

as simply an irrational response, but can be understood as Suzanne Langer persuas-

ively argues, in terms of aesthetic experience and presentational symbolism.[23]

Secondly the mere fact of myth as a symbolic structure to be interpreted and

understood in another than a literal way seems also to be important.[24]

Thirdly, and by extension, the unity of mythical thought which Cassirer

postulates but never really explores is also significant. The structure

which he finds in myth is the structure of feeling; its disentanglement

is by definition impossible, but despite that we can recognize, at least,

the problems of understanding such complex phenomena.

Ernst Cassirer is therefore offering a theory of myth which demands,

despite itself, a clear dichotomy between ancient and modern, between

one world view, the mythical, and another, the modern, religious or

scientific. It is self-consciousness, consciousness of the sign,

freedom from the concrete ties of emotion which marks the boundary.

And this freedom brings with it the freedom of the individual, the rejection

of the bonds of taboo and mythical thought.[25]

David Bidney is correct therefore, to draw a parallel between Cassirer's

work on myth and that of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl.[26] For the latter too, at

least until his very last and fragmentary work, also insisted on a clear

separation, a non-comparability between the primitive - he called it

pre-logical - and modern thought.[27]

Much influenced by Émile Durkheim, Lévy-Bruhl offers a perspective of

primitive mentality which demands the primacy of the social. At the

root of all thought are the collective representations, themselves the

product and mirror of a social structure[28], which Émile Durkheim insists

on calling elementary.[29] Here the lack of social differentiation generates

in the collective mind the impression of solidarity and above all of

participation; an impression which is centrally mystical. In such a

world dreams become real, objects and images become fused.

> "I should be inclined to say that in the collective
> representation of primitive mentality, objects, beings,
> phenomena can be, though in a way incomprehensible to
> us, both themselves and something other than themselves.
> In a fashion which is no less incomprehensible, they give
> forth and they receive mystic powers, virtues, qualities,
> influences, which make themselves felt outside, without
> ceasing to remain where they are.
>
> In other words the opposition between the one and the
> many, the same and another, and so forth, does not impose
> upon this mentality the necessity of affirming one of the
> terms, if the other be denied, or vice versa."[30]

Primitive mentality therefore has two facets. It is both mystic and prelogical.[31] Its prelogicality consists in its non-recognition of the law of contradiction: things can be what they are and other than what they are simultaneously.[32] Its mystic qualities reside in the non-recognition of secondary causes;[33] the unusual, which the primitive like ourselves wishes to explain, is explained non-empirically, or as Lévy-Bruhl suggests non-objectively. While being technologically perfectly efficient, explanations of what is perceived are offered in terms of what is felt or believed. "The actual world and the world beyond are blended".[34] And as Lévy-Bruhl notes, "their world is more complex than our universe, but on the other hand it is complete, and it is closed."[35]

At one important level, the level which Cassirer for example does not see beyond, Lévy-Bruhl is postulating a clearly defined, and different form of thought for the primitive in his collective existence. It is the description of a belief system which does not preclude the individual from being empirically sensible but which demands that explanation be other than, in our terms, logical.[36] But at the same time this unilateral vision of man's mental history is more complex and more uncertain.

First of all there is the question of myth itself. So far, and for good reason, there has been no mention of it. The reason is that the primitive in his full participation with nature and with other men needs no mediation, no rationalisation, which myth would offer:

> "Where the participation of the individual in the social
> group is still directly felt, where the participation of
> the group with the surrounding groups is actually lived
> - that is, as long as the period of mystic symbiosis lasts -
> myths are meagre in number and of poor quality.".[37]

Myths then are the product of a first stage of development, beyond the pure solidarity of social existence. They take the place of feeling, and of direct communion. As Lévy-Bruhl puts it, "participation tends to become ideological."[38] Communion is no longer lived, it is to be

spoken, to be explained.   But the myths are still tied to the mystery and

the emotion of the primitive's perception of things.   Indeed it is the

mystic element which gives myth its force and social importance.[39]   Myths,

for Lévy-Bruhl, and as we shall see also for Mircea Eliade are sacred   :

histories, and as such they function to express and to maintain the

solidarity of the social group.[40]   But once again, and in a way similar

to that of Cassirer, Lévy-Bruhl believes that to understand myths one needs

first to understand the mentality which has produced them.[41]

The second of the complicating factors lies in Lévy-Bruhls's recognition

of, and increasing insistence on, not the difference between primitive and

modern but on their similarity.   This first of all manifests itself in

the suggestion that the native is empirically competent, then in the suggestion

that mythical, participatory forms of thought persevere, and indeed they are

to be valued;

> "Il n'est pas probable que jamais il disparaisse, où s'affaiblesse
>
> au-delà d'un certain point, et sans doute n'est ce pas non plus
>
> souhaitable.   Car avec lui disparaîtraient peut-être la poésie,
>
> l'art la métaphysique, l'invention dans les sciences - bref
>
> presque tout ce qui dont la beauté et la grandeur de la vie
>
> humaine."[42]

and finally in the disquiet about the notion of prelogicality, which in

the Carnets is abandoned.[43]   It is abandoned not because Lévy-Bruhl

relinquishes his argument about the difference between two forms of thought

but because that difference no longer appears supportable by such a

category.   The problem is falsely posed, and Lévy-Bruhl, while insisting

still on the significance of participation, and on a mystical mentality,

nevertheless refuses to equate such a way of thought exclusively with the

primitive.   What this amounts to is a denial of the diachronic dichotomy,

of the evolution of one form to another, and its replacement by a synchronic

one. It is in the nature of man that both forms, emotion and rationality,

myth and science will co-exist.[44] These relative proportions will vary

and are not contradictory, but only different. Indeed Lévy-Bruhl

acknowledges that the capacity of modern science to make the world   :

intelligible is itself, as Albert Einstein notes, unintelligible and he

asks "Might there not be here simply a difference of degree? A trans-

ference of the unintelligibility of the detail to the world given in

its totality?"[45]

It is this final equivocation, an equivocation which was perhaps always

present, which makes Lévy-Bruhl's work so interesting. Once again we

need not, as he finally does not, accept an evolutionary model which

demands a clear distinction and a clear measure of inferiority. Nor

need we accept that the primitive was a permanent prisoner of his emotions

or that myths are exclusively the product of emotion. But we can

acknowledge, with him, that a significant part of man's inheritance involves

the mysterious and that myth in expressing that, effects a transformation

from the profane to the sacred, a transformation of history into mythical

time and space.

The explanation of in what mythical time and space consists, is the

peculiar preserve of the endlessly recursive theorizing of Mircea Eliade.

Eliade, unlike Cassirer and Lévy-Bruhl, is concerned exclusively with

myths - and myths are sacred histories. As he, synoptically, puts it:

> "Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that
> took place in primordial time, the fabled time of the
> "beginnings". In other words, myth tells how, through the
> deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence,
> be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment
> of reality - an island, a species of plant, a particular
> kind of human behaviour, an institution. Myth then,
> is always an account of a "creation"; it relates how
> something was produced, how it began to be. Myth tells
> only of that which really happened....myths describe the
> various and sometimes dramatic breakthroughs of the
> sacred (or the 'supernatural') into the world. It is this

sudden breakthrough of the sacred that really _establishes_
the World and makes it what it is today. Furthermore, it
is a result of the intervention of Supernatural Beings that
man himself is what he is today, a mental, sexed and
cultural being." [46]

This generalization is palpably absurd.   Clearly countless myths have

nothing whatever to do with origins and even many that do, seem to be

adding only an aetiological footnote to an otherwise entirely differently

oriented tale.[47]   Indeed the unequivocal equation of myth with the sacred

is also open to dispute, for many tales which we would expect to call

myths have nothing or very little of the sacred about them, either in

their content or the context of their telling.[48]   Nevertheless if we

water down the argument, and reduce its content of yeast, a number of

important perceptions remain.

Mircea Eliade is concerned to identify both a number of themes within,

and a number of functions served by, myth.   Myth, as for Cassirer and

Lévy-Bruhl, is participatory; it is prompted by and part of a deep

spiritualization of the environment, natural, and human.   The world

that myth presents is supremely sacred and as such it is real, more

real in a certain sense than empirical reality.   To enter the mythic

world involves a transformation, both in space and time.   In space one

moves from the periphery to the centre, the hub, and that movement is

simultaneously one from the illusory to the real,[49] the profane to the

sacred.   Ritual action creates that space.   This ritually[50] defined and

sacred space, in its centrality redefines profane geography.   If all

roads lead to the centre, as they do in Eliade's view of archaic and

mythic thought, then social and empirical distance is abolished.

In a similar way empirical, historical time is abolished by its trans-

formation into the sacred world of myth.   Now the concern is with

origins, with _illo tempore_, and all ritual action, and mythical thought,

seeks to recreate and return to that time when both things began and
when they were perfect.[51]   Historical, real time, is abolished either
in rites of regeneration or eschatological visions.[52]   The linearity
of profane time gives way to the endlessly circular and the repetitive.   :
And in this denial of progress or of movement of any sort, and in the
creation of cosmogony which this involves, myth provides an exemplary
model for all human action.

One might think that this mode of expression is oppressive, but Eliade argues
the reverse.[53]   Archaic man is freed the weight bf dead Time',   of history.
He can abolish his past, begin his life anew, re-create his World.   "Myth
assures man that what he is about to do has already been done; in other
words it helps him to overcome doubts as to the result of his undertaking...
There is no reason to fear settling in an unknown, wild territory,
because one knows what one has to do.   One has merely to repeat the
cosmogonic ritual, whereupon the unknown territory (= Chaos) is transformed
into "Cosmos", becomes an imago mundi and hence a ritually legitimized
"habitation".... The World is no longer an opaque mass of objects arbitrarily
thrown together, it is a living Cosmos, articulated and meaningful.   In the
last analysis, the World reveals itself as language.   It speaks to man
through its own mode of being, through its structure and its rhythms."[54]

And we might add too that, as Eliade conceives of it, in myth nothing
remains unexplained.   Suffering was bearable in its explanation - we
might say in its being explained away.   It was never absurd.   "Suffering
is regarded as the consequence of a deviation in respect of the norm" and
its critical moment" lies in its appearance;   suffering is perturbing only
insofar as its cause remains undiscovered."[55]

Mircea Eliade's theories, it would appear, explain too much. In the face of much empirical evidence his generalizations are unwarranted, as indeed is the extension of his analysis from the content of myth to belief and action. Nevertheless there are a number of important insights in what he has to say, not least because he refuses to limit the mythical imagination and the mythical world to archaic man. He insists many times that both in the content (for example, Superman), in the form (in narrative transformation) and in belief (the suspension of disbelief and the escape from real time in the act of reading a novel) that we in the twentieth century are as involved in and as enamoured of myth as any of our ancestors.[56] And indeed this denial of historical, linear time which is so central to his view of myth reappears, only to be condemned, in Marx's and Engels' analysis of bourgeois ideology;[57] a theme which is revived in the mythology of Roland Barthes.[58]

He has also identified certain preoccupations within human culture, not perhaps universal or persistent, but general and resistant to change, and he has shown in what ways these preoccupations are incorporated into and spoken by myth. Furthermore his view of myth has one other attraction, though it is not one on which he dwells or develops; it finds its justification both in tl individual and the social. The former is relieved of his fear of chaos and the latter, society, whose institutions might be conceived of as serving a similar purpose, are supported and buttressed by it.

What unites the first three theories of myth which have been considered, apart from their inadequacy when treated on their own terms, is their stress on the world view that myth generates and in which it participates. Whatever else they might be, myths and the thought which they are supposed to express, are different from the world of science, and from the world of commonsense - the sacred as opposed to the profane. However that difference, particularly with regard to the profane world of commonsense, is not a difference of distance but an intimate one. Each world stresses the same emotions and

the mythic intrudes into all manner of everyday acts and thoughts. But at
the same time this world of mystery and imagination, of feeling, participation
and transformation is involved in the creation of order and of a secure
reality out of the darkness of the unknown.   This order is not a logical
one, nor is it essentially cognitive.   To understand myth in this sense
and to explore in what ways that order is created and maintained coldly
and unemotionally, one needs to turn to the theories of myth of Claude
Lévi-Strauss.

> "Myths and rites are far from being, as has often been held,
> the product of men's 'myth-making faculty', turning its
> back on reality.   Their principal value is indeed to
> preserve until the present time the remains of methods of
> observation and reflection which were (and no doubt still are)
> precisely adapted to discoveries of a certain type: those
> which nature authorised from the starting point of a
> speculative organization and exploitation of the sensible
> world in sensible terms." [59]

In this quotation Claude Lévi-Strauss is clearly opposing the kind of
mythopoeic view which underlies the arguments I have just been discussing,
but as I have suggested elsewhere, especially with regard to Cassirer,
Lévi-Strauss's own work is not as far removed from the neo-Kantianism of
those he opposes as he is inclined to think.[60]   Be that as it may, however,
what clearly distinguishes them is the different and central stress that
is laid upon the role of reason and emotion.   While Lévi-Strauss recognizes
that myth and magic have affectivity as their source, he insists that myth
is essentially intellectual.[61]   Impulses and emotions are never causes, but
only results.   Causes "can be sought only in the organism, which is the
exclusive concern of biology, or in the intellectual which is the sole way
offered to psychology, and to anthropology as well".[62]   The demands of
what he takes to be his object, the need, as he sees it, for a material
grounding for anthropology, and the failure of Emile Durkheim and Marcel
Mauss in Primitive Classification[63]   to transcend the implications of
their own theory, all conspire to produce the following axiom:

"As affectivity is the most obscure side of man, there has been the constant temptation to resort to it, forgetting that what is refractory to explanation is ipso facto unsuitable for use in explanation. A datum is not primary because it is incomprehensible."[64]

I will reserve a detailed discussion of the method of Lévi-Strauss's analysis until the next chapter and will do nothing more now than outline the major elements in his view of myth.[65]

Myth is a language, which in its own particular order both reflects the ordered activity of man's mind and derives or attempts to resolve the natural disorder of precultural experience. Myth is functionless, or at least it serves no practical function.[66] Its purpose, rather, is to present to the minds of the men who create it and who hear it evidence of their own mastery of the world, a mastery which is both intellectual and cognitive. Myths are anonymous, "from the moment they are seen as myths, and whatever their real origins, they exist only as elements embodied in a tradition. When the myth is repeated, the individual listeners are receiving a message that, properly speaking, is coming from nowhere; this is why it is credited with a supernatural origin."[67] The truth of myth is therefore in its structure, not in its manifestation; the truth is not available directly to the native who hears it. Partly that truth is emotional, visceral,[68] partly that truth is diffused through the system of myth, so that each single text reveals a portion of it only. It is in the redundance of the system as a whole that the message gains its coherence. And it is only the mythologist, privileged by distance, theory and method, who can define in what the truth of myth consists.[69]

This privilege has not gone unchallenged, of course. The accounts
that Lévi-Strauss produces are neither simply verifiable nor falsi-
fiable in their own terms - they are both complex and selective of
empirical support - nor are they entirely supportive of the structure, ,
the theory of mind and culture, which he erects above them.[70] But
in this failing, as we have seen, he is not alone. The failure can
be acknowledged, condoned even, but nevertheless recognized as being
productive. In what way?

Firstly, myth is seen as a language. The meanings that it generates,
combining and dependent on both _langue_ (the structured rules, defining
the possibility of language) and _parole_ (the product of that possibility,
the infinity of speech), are at the same time beyond language. "Myth
is language, functioning on an especially high level where meaning succeeds
practically, taking off from the linguistic ground on which it keeps
rolling."[71] The units of the mythical text are superior to the units
of natural language but gain their significance by their place in a
synchronic and diachronic system in precisely the same way as, according
to Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobson, the units of natural
language do. Not words, but bundles of words are the primary units -
the mythemes - of the mythical system. And it is within the mytheme
that the coincidence of _langue_ and _parole_ and also of reversible and
non-reversible time takes place; .... "myth uses a third referent
which combines the properties of the first two. On the one hand a
myth always refers to events alleged to have taken place long ago.
But what gives the myth an operational value is that the specific pattern
described is timeless; it explains the present and the past as well as
the future."[72]

Myth, and it is always the mythic system, not the individual myth,
presents essentially a synchronic, a static structure of meaning.

While a single myth develops chronologically and deals with
historical events, the system as a whole imposes a logic of its
own which simultaneously denies that history and transforms it.
What then we are left with, as a result of this operation, is a
coherent account presented in terms of the concrete categories
of empirical experience, of the primitive - essentially preliterate -
culture. The myths are basically answers to questions, and the
questions and to a degree the answers also, are the universal ones
of human existence. Centred on and around the dichotomy of nature
and culture, and of the problems associated both with understanding
and defending that boundary, the myths deal with problems of cooking,
of table manners, of sexual relationships, of economic survival and
so on.

There is inevitably some ambiguity here, for much of this apparent
meaningfulness in the myths is available in their content, and not
in their structure. It is clear, for example, that Asdiwal's marriages,
on the one hand, and the dribbling frog on the other, have quite manifestly
to do with what Lévi-Strauss only reaches structurally, problems of
kinship relations and problems of table manners respectively.[73] Such
an observation as this, which is also made by G.S. Kirk,[74] would suggest
that contrary to what Lévi-Strauss insists, not all details of the myth
are equally important or indeed structured,[75.] and much of the myth's
meaning is available without the detailed analysis of which he is so
fond. Nevertheless what he insists on being able to show, and this
only through the myth's structure, are the various levels at which
mythic communication takes place.

"So complicated a journey through the mythic field,
along roads which sometimes proceed in the same direction,
but follow courses which are far apart while remaining
parallel, or intersect or even turn back upon themselves,
would be incomprehensible if we did not realize that it
has allowed us to carry out several tasks simultaneously.
This volume presents the development of an argument in
three dimensions - ethnographical, logical and semantic;
and, if it has any claim to originality, this will be
because, at every stage, it has shown how each dimension
remains inseparable from the others."[76]

This is important, for Lévi-Strauss's question of myth is not so

much the what of it, but the how of it.   And it is for this reason

that his definition of myth is an operational one, not linked to

content or particular texts, but to a way of communication, peculiar,

as he would argue,to preliterature cultures and to societies, he calls

them cold, without history.   Once again we meet the dichotomy and

once again we can, in part, ignore it.   For, indeed Lévi-Strauss

does also.   On the one hand he stresses the boundary between societies

with and without history, cultures with and without writing, and

those who have science and philosophy rather than myth.[77]   But then,

as he continually insists, the intellectual capacity of the mind of

man is unchanging: "The difference lies not in the quality of the

intellectual process, but in the nature of things to which it is

applied;   man has always been thinking equally well."[78]

III

I have presented, albeit briefly, an account of what for want of

a better phrase, we might call the visionary theories of myth.

Each of them is in its own way suggestive;   each of them, or so it

seems to me, is saying something important about the mythical

imagination and the functional significance of that particular form

of communication.   We can accept that myth, precisely in its

combination of emotion and reason articulates a particular view of

the world which is distant from, though not opposed to, the profane

world of everyday experience. That the relationship between the
two is complex and often blurred goes without saying, as equally
complex and blurred is the boundary between myth and science.
Nevertheless the distinction holds, as it must; for without it a
most significant tension in human existence would go unrecorded.

But if the concern is to identify a specific form of communication,
then clearly that communication is not exclusively a verbal one,
nor is it without its effects, social or individual. We might
then enquire, as has been done consistently in the study of myth,
into its connection with magic and ritual. Such enquiry will
inevitably be a limited one here. There is as much dispute as to
the nature of ritual and magic as there is of myth. Indeed the
literature and the controversy which it articulates is extensive.
As Edmund Leach notes at the end of his Encyclopedia article:
"...it has been stressed that even among those who have specialised
in the field, there is the widest possible disagreement as to how the
word ritual should be used and how the performance of ritual should
be understood."[79] The differences between such an expression of
what might pass for either honesty or insecurity and the confidence
of Ruth Benedict's equivalent attempt at definition some thirty years
earlier is both marked and symptomatic of much that has happened within
the social sciences.[80]

However central to any consideration of this sacred triad is the work
of Bronislaw Malinowski and in particular his collection of essays
Magic, Science and Religion.[81] Malinowski is much influenced by
Sir James Frazer who saw an intimate connection between myth and
ritual and between magic and religion. Ritual precedes myth and
magic religion.[82] Magic itself, in a view of it which in turn

depends on that of Sir Edward Tyler is pseudo-science. For

Tyler myth and magic depends on the twin pillars of animism,

"the doctrine of souls and other spiritual beings in general", and

analogy in which objects are thought to feel and act in ways

analogous to human feelings and actions."[83] Sir James Frazer's

consideration of magic and ritual is as firmly grounded in the

security of Victorian England, in which the primitive magician,

scientist manqué, is seen as acting through the childhood of man's intellectual

development. But that mistake itself rests on a correct perception

of the two forms of analogy, metaphor and metonymy, which become in

the practice of the magician, homeopathic and contagious magic.

Magic, based on these principles, correctly denies the intervention

of a spiritual being between intention and effect, but incorrectly

understands that connection in its misunderstanding of the laws of

nature.[84]

Malinowski's Trobrianders inhabit the same world of practical responses

to basic needs. Magic fills the gap between the demand and the

ability to effectively control nature. It is akin to science, but

it is pseudo-science. "It always has a definite aim intimately

associated with human instinct, needs and pursuits. The magic art is

directed towards the attainment of practical ends; like any other art or

craft it is also governed by theory and by a system of principles which

dictate the manner in which the act has to be performed in order to be

effective."[85] It consists in formula, rite and reasonably enough, the

presence of a magician. Magic, the rite and the spells in which it consists,

are traditional activities, indeed they need to be in order to be

effective; which is as much to say in order for them to be believed in.

And it is in the justification, guarantee and indeed legitimation of

magic which it is myth's function to fulfil.[86]

"It can be said without exaggeration that the most typical, most highly developed mythology in primitive societies is that of magic, and the function of myth is not to explain but to vouch for, not to satisfy curiosity but to give confidence in power, not to spin out yarns, but to establish the flowing freely from present-day occurrences, frequently similar validity of belief."[87]

I will reserve comment as to the usefulness of such an observation for the moment and remark only, but significantly , that for Malinowski myth is preeminantly to be understood sociologically, and functionally. Myths, and not just those intimately connected with magic exist for the telling of origins, for the maintenance of the traditions and in order to provide a charter for present action.[88] Myth is not idle speculation, nor a symbolic communication; it neither explains nor illustrates. It is firmly grounded in the practical demands of everyday life, and in particular in a life in which rational and empirical control is sorely limited. It "fulfils in primitive culture an indispensible function; it expresses, enhances and codifies beliefs; it safeguards and enforces morality, it vouches for the efficiency of ritual and contains practical rules for the guidance of men".[89] Myths themselves are in no need of explanation; their meaning is clear enough and their function is just as clear. In Malinowski's ringing prose; "Myth is a constant by-product of living faith, which is in need of miracles; of sociological status, which demands precedent; of moral rule, which requires satisfaction."[90]

Clearly Malinowski overstates his case. Myths may very well serve to legitimise action, ritual, magical or otherwise and justify the institutions of a society but they need not do so exclusively nor indeed directly. Myths can offer explanation as well as justification and the way they do either can be the subject of an interpretation which accepts their symbolic nature rather than their manifest and directly observable content.

Furthermore as G. S. Kirk points out myths and ritual are not necessarily co-existent nor is myth by virtue of that supposed co-existence necessarily sacred [91].

However, there a number of threads to be extracted from such a position. Assuming, for the time being, that we have some understanding of what myth consists in, either despite or because of Malinowski, we need to enquire both into the nature of ritual and into the connection between ritual and myth. Ritual, for Ruth Benedict, is a form "of prescribed and elaborated behaviour"; it is both individual, in the neurotic,and cultural. Ritual is "extra necessitous for the technological point of view" and it is a "prescribed form of behaviour for the occasions not given over to technological routine" [92]. While this definition suggests one of the dichotomies apparently so essential in the definition of ritual, that of the rational and the irrational and in that it follows Malinowski, it avoids or assumes the second, that between the sacred and the profane. Emile Durkheim's argument for the division of the world made by religious thought is a familiar and highly influential one: "all known religious beliefs, whether simple or complex, present one common characteristic: they presuppose a classification of all the things, real and ideal, of which men think, into two classes or opposed groups, generally designated by two distinct terms which are translated well enough by the words profane and sacred. This division of the world into two domains, the one containing all that is sacred, the other all that is profane, is the distinctive trait of religious thought" [93].

This dichotomy, like the one between rational and irrational, is much insisted upon, but in a way similar to the first it is charged with being ethnocentric and likely to be inadequate as a viable classification of the native's own thought - as much is shown by E.E. Evans-Pritchard in his study of the Azande [94]. Arguing as such and at the same time denying its universal applicability, Jack Goody nevertheless insists/the observer's right to

observe and therefore on the analytical serviceability of such a dichotomy [95]
and similarly Edmund Leach prefers to argue in an early work that such a

dichotomy expresses a continuum rather than an absolute."From this point of

view technique and ritual, profane and sacred, do not denote types/ but ; of action

aspects of almost any kind of action."[96]

But to blur this category while at the same time observing it extends the

range of actions that might be included within ritual. On the one hand it

is a form of consecrated behaviour, but on the other hand we can and do

extend the notion of ritual to include non-religious ceremonials and even

non-public ceremonials, the rituals of family and inter-personal relations [97]

The classification of different forms and functions of ritual can then be

endless.

What can be disentangled from all this? We can insist on the preservation

of the distinction between the sacred and the profane worlds even in the

acknowledgement that in certain cultures and society that distinction may

be relatively meaningless. For us it signifies the ability to accord

special significance to a certain set of actions and to a certain set of

beliefs. To employ a linguistic analogy the sacred is an equivalent of the

marked term and minimally this itself suggests distinction and difference [98] .

Secondly we can make a distinction between the function and the form of

ritual action and acknowledge that it is predominantly with regard to the form

its function, that controversy centres. A ritual is social. While it need

not as Jack Goody argues, depend on the physical presence of a community, it

becomes meaningful only through its collective acknowledgement [99] . And

ritual in the peculiar clarity and consistency of its forms is clearly both

opposed and responsive to the ambiguity endemic in social life. Max Gluckman

for example sees ritual as the particular product of tribal societies, he

calls them "multiplex" in which social role and status is diffuse.[100]

Ritual is   essentially to do with the disentangling of status and role

and in the establishment of authority within the social structure [101].

He suggests therefore two interdependent hypotheses; the first proposes

that the greater the secular differentiation of role the less ritual there

will be and the less mystery in the ceremonial of etiquette; the second

proposes that the greater the multiplicity of undifferentiated and over-

lapping roles, the more ritual there is to separate them. The presence or

absence of ritual therefore grows out of the social structure; an argument

which leads him to suggest that the reason for relative absence of ritual

in our own society is due both to the segregation of roles and to the

segregation of conflict between roles. [102]   This is, I think once again,

too narrow a view. Clearly there is more to status than role differentiation;

and contemporary preoccupations with status, both individual and collective

grow out of a society whose ambiguity consists not so much on fusion of role

but on the contrary,   on its elaboration.

The relation nevertheless between ritual and status is a central one, [103]

though it can be extended beyond the strict sense of social status.

Ritual expresses and attempts to resolve not just the uncertainties of

social status but the uncertainties attached to the status of any and perhaps

every aspect of culture. Myth also, as I have argued, seems to function

in this way. And it is probably this equivalence of response to, as it were,

structural demands of society, that underlies all attempts to make myths

and ritual mutually supportive.

For Clyde Kluckhohn in the context of his attempt at a general theory of

myth, this is expressed not in terms of society but in terms of the individual:

"...the only uniformity which can be positive is that there is a strong

tendency for some sort of interrelationship between myth and ceremony and

that this relationship is dependent upon what appears, so far as present

information goes, to be an invariant function of both myth and ritual;

the gratification(most often in the negative form of anxiety reduction)

of a large proportion of the individuals in a society". [104] This

formulation involves the introduction of insights derived from psychoanalysis,

specifically Anna Freud's characterisation of the ego's defence mechanisms

and Malinowski's theory of myth as a charter. But as I have already pointed

out, myths occur without rituals and vice versa and myths have characteristics

rituals have not, "their fantasy, their freedom to develop and their complex

structure." [105]

There is, therefore, no clear agreement on what might pass as the function

either of ritual or myth. Like so many arguments of a similar cast, the

problem is the non-falsifiability of the theory even were it to be coherent.

The presentation of "myths" which were clearly non-functional or at least

not functioning in the prescribed way could easily be, by definition,

excluded from the theory.   So in the absence of/an alternative definition

of myth, one which G. S. Kirk, for example, refuses to provide, his so-

called aberrant myths are not myths at all. In any case the perception

of myth as preeminently a response to, and an attempted resolution of stress

and strain within culture and society is one that dies hard. Terence Turner

in recasting Lévi-Strauss's Oedipus myth is a powerful advocate of such a

perspective [106] , and even Clifford Geertz's comments on it, telling though

they may be, still leave the functionist beast alive. [107]

We can avoid, in part, the functionlist tautology on the one hand, and

G. S. Kirk's, albeit highly intelligent and persuasive eclecticism on the

other, if we follow another route;   the route prescribed by considering

both myth and ritual as languages - indeed as a language. As Marcel Mauss

writes: "all ritual is a kind of language, it therefore translates ideas." [108]

And Edmund Leach following Claude Lévi-Strauss, and taking also

a cue from J.L. Austin argues similarly: "We engage in rituals

in order to transmit collective messages to ourselves."[109]

Ritual becomes a form of expressive communication involving no clear

distinction between audience and performers. The source or origin

of the ritual is neither clear nor important, and what is of

immediate and consummate interest is the patterning of acts, words,

images and music which make up a collectively legitimised, though

still individually perceived,message.

Myth is also language, and the relation between it and ritual no

longer becomes necessarily dependent on reference to the society

in which they are found or which produces them. Nor is there any

reason to suggest that the response will be homologous. Indeed

Claude Lévi-Strauss has made just this point in considering the

similar ritual but different myth of the Mandan and Hidatsa Indians.[110]

What now becomes the issue is the form, or structure, that myths and

rituals present and which guarantees their communication. As I

have already noted myths and rituals will vary enormously in their

complexity; and we can expect mythic language to be more developed

and more subtle. But we can also expect that the basic logical

principles will be similar; they will consist in the transformation

of sign and symbol, metonymy and metaphor, and in such a way that the

basic categories of spatial, temporal and causal differentiation are

given concrete expression.[111] Together and separately, myth and

ritual comprise a system and it is only within this system that any

one item gains its meaning. The interpretation of myth and ritual,

therefore, while not undertaken independently of any consideration

of its social and cultural context, is nevertheless not determined

by it.

Arnold Van Gennep, while not offering a linguistic theory of ritual

in any precise sense, nevertheless sees ritual in systematic terms,

identifying the basic elements of ritual, whose significance is

gained in the relationship to each other.   He sees ritual, not in

terms of "the particular rites" but in the essential significance

and their relative positions within ceremonial wholes, that is, their

order.... the underlying arrangements is always the same.   Beneath

a multiplicity of forms, either consciously expressed or merely

implied, a typical pattern always recurrs;   the pattern of the rites

of passage."[112]   Like so many seminal ideas this one is remarkably

simple.   It consists firstly in the Durkheimian hypostatisation

of the sacred and the profane which, in Van Gennep's view is given above
in ritual
all/ spatial and territorial expression, but which is also manifested

in time, in the seasonal and life-cycle patterns of human existence.

The movement from profane to sacred and back again is a movement

fraught with social implications, and in order to effect such a movement

a transitional stage is necessary.   The movement, in any case, is

marked by ritual whose dynamics consist in three phases;   those of

separation, transition and incorporation.[113]   A man, on coming of age,

will be taken away from his family and friends, a separation involving

ceremony, and placed beyond that circle, physically and socially,

before being allowed to return.   His return, however, equally marked

by ceremonial, will see him with a new status: sacred from the

perspective of his previous state, but now profane by virtue of his

involvement in it.[114]

This pattern is the basic one which Van Gennep asserts underlies all

ritual, those of life cycle, birth and death, marriage and initiation,

and those of any ceremony which involves an even temporary acknowledgement

of the sacred.   Indeed any such movement, even for example meeting and

leave taking is marked by a transitional period, albeit brief, which
in his views serves to "make the break gradual rather than abrupt."[115]
All boundaries which are given ritual expression, which are ritually
marked, are marked in such a way as to make movement through them
both visible, that is they are given symbolic expression, and relatively
painless. Some societies are clearly more conscious of these
thresholds than others, and different societies will give different
aspects of their culture ritual expression. With a metaphor that
we shall have cause to remember Van Gennep makes this point quite
clearly: "A society is similar to a house divided into rooms and
corridors. The more the society resembles ours in its form of
civilization, the thinner are its internal partitions and the wider
and more open are its doors of communication. In a semi-civilized
society, on the other hand, sections are carefully isolated, and
passage from one to another must be made through formalities and
ceremonies which show extensive parallels to the rites of territorial
passage...."[116].

It is clear that in our own society the scale of ritual in interpersonal
relations and at points of transition in our life cycle is not great, as
Van Gennep notes, though those passages in and out of the sacred which
are marked, are done so in ways perfectly in tune with Van Gennep's
characterizations of them. Edmund Leach, for example, draws attention
to the role of formality, masquerade, and role reversal as marking in
all forms of society, including our own, the aspects of separation,
incorporation (interchangeably) and transition respectively.[117] And
he, like Van Gennep, wishes to establish the coincidence and validity
of the logic across and between cultures, irrespective of, though not
irrelevant to, the particular beliefs and practices which are associated
with it.

I hope to argue, that in our society and culture this ritualisation
is given expression not so much in the details of social relations
but in the forms of its culture, that it is not so much in terms of
the 'lived' relations of social status, but in the 'thought' relation
of the status of knowledge and ideas.   It is in this sense that such
a transition marking and ameliorating institution as television gains
its significance.   The source of our social and cultural anxiety has
been, to a degree, displaced.   We are much less concerned by the facts
of birth, marriage or death, for example, in contemporary culture, because
it might appear, we have forms of knowledge which have allowed us to
deny or minimize the dangers associated with them. We are, however,
much more concerned with that knowledge itself, and with the dangers
that it poses to our security.   Culture is itself, in its cognitive
or aesthetic aspects, in need of mediation, and television, in both
its content and its form, is a central instrument of that mediation.
It marks the site of the most important rite de passage in our
contemporary society.

I shall return to these issues shortly and to an attempt to characterize
the way in which television can be understood mythically and ritually,
but before I do there is one further dimension of the problem to be
considered.   This too, like the equation of myth and ritual, has a
semantic quality about it, but equally it has operational significance.
It is the question of the difference between myth and folktale.
IV

The dispute is endless.   Its resolution is not helped by the failure,
as we have seen, to agree on what myth is.   On the one hand there
are those who argue that the material of myth and folktale is inter-
changeable,[118] and that it is only the sacred quality of the former
which marks it as distinct,; and there are those who suggest that

myth is the general category of which folktales are a species[119] or even that folktales are, in a number of significant ways, a degeneration of myth.[120] Let me explore some of these aspects in a little more detail.

Stith Thompson, the folklorist, identifies the coincidence of plot structure underlying the different forms of tale: "Fairytales become myths, or animal tales, or local legends. As stories transcend differences of age or of place and move from the ancient world to ours, or from ours to a primitive society, they often undergo protean transformations in style and narrative purpose. For the plot structure of the tale is much more stable and persistent than its form."[121] It is the mutual convertability of myth to folktale and vice versa, which he, and Franz Boas, equally stress. Each, for Boas is the product "of the play of imagination with the events of human life; an imagination and a play which is rather limited.....People much rather operate with the old stock of imaginative happenings than invent new ones."[122] Ruth Benedict also finds little with which to distinguish folktale and myth: "Myths like folk tales are primarily novelistic tales, the two are to be distinguished only by the fact that myths are tales of the supernatural world and share also therefore the characteristics of the religious complex."[123]

But this diffuseness is not general, and those who are cognisant of the narrative structure and its variation seem prepared to hazard more than this - though inevitably not without some backsliding. For example, Thompson quotes A. Olrik on the definition of the folktale, only to suggest that it is, rather, the difference between oral and literary narrative that is being distinguished.[124] G.S. Kirk also offers a definition of a folktale; "traditional tales, of no firmly established form, in which supernatural elements are subsidiary;

they are not primarily concerned with serious subjects or the

reflexion of deep problems and preoccupations; and their first

appeal lies in their narrative interest.";[125] which stresses little

that is unequivocal even including the seriousness of the content

of myth, a seriousness which suggests a difference in the intensity

with which they are believed. For Kirk the folktale is a derivative,

logical if not chronological, from the unbounded category of myth;

and what links them is the presence of folktale motifs or narrative

devices often visible in an elaborated myth.[126]   It might even be

that the folktale is a discovery of the early nineteenth century,

a figment of the imagination of those who discovered peasant culture

in all its illiterate glory.[127]

Nevertheless it does seem reasonable to suggest that folktales

involve the weakening and the transformation of myth. That much

at least is agreed by Vladimir Propp and Claude Lévi-Strauss, and

by someone who might be called their mediator, Eleazor Meletinsky.[128]

I will reserve a discussion of the methodological dispute until the

next chapter and concentrate, albeit briefly, on the substantial

arguments.

Vladimir Propp has little to say beyond recognizing that "the fairytale

in its morphological basis represents a myth," [129] but he is taken

well to task for failing to incorporate that insight into his analyses

of the narrative of the folktale by Claude Lévi-Strauss. Lévi-Strauss,

in offering his own version of the relationship, begins by making

a questionnable assumption - that "almost all societies perceive the

two genera as distinct"[130] - but /then makes two more substantive suggestions:

"In the first instance, the tales are constructed on weaker oppositions

than those found in myths. The latter are not cosmological, metaphysical,

or natural, but, more frequently, local, social and moral.   In the

second place - and precisely because the tale is a weakened trans-

position of the myth - the former is less strictly subjected than

the latter to the triple considerations of logical coherence,   ;

religious orthodoxy, and collective pressure.   The tale offers more

possibilities of play, its permutations are comparatively freer, and

they progressively acquire a certain arbitrary character."[131]

For Lévi-Strauss, as I hope to argue in the next chapter, Proppian

                                        in it
analysis is basically misconceived because/he attaches himself to

the derivative and incomplete text of the folktale, but clearly

this is simply a case of one man's meat.   The issue, methodologically,

has to do with the relative stress one places on the chronology of the

story as compared with the structural logic of a mythic system.   The

choice itself is in part determined, and this would be the point, by

the relative strength of one form of ordering over the other in a

mythical or non-mythical text.   The shift, in a sense, involves a shift

from, in myth, a deep structure of logical categories given concrete

expression synchronically, to in a folktale, a less deep (though still

not manifest) structure of chronologic and function.   In an extreme

way, the meaning of a myth lies in the mythic system, while that of

a folktale can be divined from the single text, at least in conjunction

with ethnographic and sociological evidence.

Despite having defended Propp against Lévi-Strauss, Eleazor Meletinsky's

recent return, in English, to the subject of myth and folktale,[132]

involves an acceptance of the primacy of myth, and the argument that

the transformation from myth to folktale involves a movement away from

the cosmic to the social and the individual. But this is a transformation

and not a denial of the basically mythic structures of categorial opposition

and presumably does not involve any change in the myth's basic

function which is to explain "the existing social and cosmic order

in such a way as to support it, by excluding inexplicable events

and hopeless contradictions."[133]

We need no longer accept such an inclusive and totalitarian

formulation entirely, but it has some, inevitable foundation.   So too

does Meletinsky's characterisation of the elements of the transition

from myth to folktale.   I can briefly list them without detailed

comment: the elimination of ritual and sacred elements, the weakening

of strict belief in the truth of the mythological happenings, the

development of conscious invention, the loss of ethnographic concreteness,

the substitution of ordinary people for mythical heroes, of indeterminate

fairytale time for the age of myth, the weakening or loss of aetiologism,

the shift of attention from collective destinies to individual ones,

and from cosmic destiny to social destiny.[134]   What is involved, essentially,

is a change of scale.

"In the fairytale, the objects that are acquired and the goods that

are achieved are not elements of nature and culture, but food, women,

magical articles etc., which bring about the hero's good fortune;

instead of a first beginning of things, we find here a redistribution

of goods which the hero acquires for himself, or for his immediate

circle."[135]   One might be tempted to characterize this as the

consumerization of myth, and indeed this is not as entirely unfanciful

as it might appear.[136]

Not only does the folktale therefore offer a weakening of much which

in myth gives it its power, whether that is interpreted logically or

aesthetically, but it brings the telling of tales, in a sense, much

closer to home.   The content of the folktale is less transcendent;

it is told for enjoyment and as I have noted in the last chapter,

the teller of folktales and songs is given a certain licence in

his narration.   This might also be true, of course in the telling of

myth, but insofar as myths are linked to particular rituals and

actually do recount an origin or explain a practice, then this must

be less likely and less extreme.

y
—

Let me now discuss, by way of summary, not myth and folktales or even

ritual as separate phenomena, but the mythic which contains them all.

In view of the disputes and differences on matters of substance this

seems both reasonable and likely to be more profitable.   It does not

involve an argument for mythopoeia, a mythic form of thought, but

more in the way of Lévy-Bruhl, a mythic dimension to thought.   Such

a dimension will gain greater or less expression, depending on the

culture and on its development;   it will be expressed differently and

through different forms likewise.   It is the present argument, of

course, that our society is no more exempt from this than any other,

claims for the disenchantment of the world notwithstanding.   And it

is the present argument that/television, supremely among the mass media,

which articulates the mythic in contemporary society.

A definition is in order.   The mythic dimension of culture contains

traditional stories and actions whose source is the persistent need to

deny chaos and create order.   It contributes to the security of

social and cultural existence.   The mythic is a world apart, but it is

also close at hand.   It acts as a bridge between the everyday and the

transcendent, the known and the unknown, the sacred and the profane.

Such a definition contains the following elements:

    1.   narration.

    2.   tradition.

3. motivation.

4. function

5. framing.

6. mediation.

I will consider each in turn.

1. **Narration** Much of the remainder of this thesis will be concerned with narrative and I will postpone its substantive discussion. Suffice it to say that the telling, singing or acting of myth and folktale, within or apart from ritual, involves the communication of an ordered and rule governed text. The rules are both constraining and enabling. They guarantee the viability of the performance; they generate in the disciplined mixing of the novel and the familiar and of risk and certainty, the pleasure of the tale.[137] Narration itself is, in a certain sense, a transcendence.

Conversation, of course, is rule governed, and includes quite naturally the telling of stories;[138] indeed jokes, fables, proverbs constitute a logical residue of the miniminally performed and they mark, along with the unselfconscious products of informal narration, the hither end of the mythic.

Similarly for Claude Lévi-Strauss the deterioration of myth begins with the folktale and ends with the serial romance.[139] Beyond that it is no longer worthy of the name. Clearly not all stories belong to the mythic, though perhaps they all have something of the magical about them. But clearly too, what makes a story a myth, is the social recognition that it is such; and mythic narratives are essentially collective properties, both anonymous and secure.[140]

Television's narratives are mythic in this sense, as I hope subsequently to show. They preserve in their structure the relatively simple logic of event and meaning, of more obviously mythic tales. Everything in television is told, though it remains to be established conclusively, of course, that everything which television tells is mythic.

2. **Tradition** "If then myths are traditional tales, then their telling is subject to the rules of all traditional tales: they will be varied in some degree on virtually every occasion of telling, and the variations will be determined by the whim, the ambition or the particular thematic repertoire of the individual teller, as well as by the receptivity and special requirements of the particular audience."[141] It is the structure of the tale which preserves its authority, as well as the structure of the performance within which it is narrated. The conservatism of which the mythic is an embodiment and which it expresses is dynamic and complex. So to be effective conservative thought needs to be able to maintain harmony with the new, and the mythic does this by processes of adjustment and cooperation wherein its structures are preserved. Innovation in culture is itself constrained by, and dependent on, not so much the weight or the content of tradition, but on the presence within that tradition of the forms of expression and orientation which have developed generally, if not universally, as the response of man's fundamental confrontation with his world.[142]

It seems hard to assert that television is traditional; it is certainly compelling in its repetitions, but equally certain and equally obvious in its contempt for anything which is not new and not unique.[143] Even history becomes de-reified in the dramatization of the moment. However once again, not much beneath the surface, television is traditional; not only does it establish its own traditions, in programmes and more significantly in the sheer act of watching[144], but it depends crucially

on the restraints of storytelling. At this level we already know -
and I hope to demonstrate - that television is the preserver of
tradition and that novelty is a thin disguise.

The culture which sustains and is sustained by it is a folk culture -
the little tradition perhaps, though not exclusively rural nor in
any way immune from the influence of the elite.[145] A folk culture is,
almost by definition, a traditional culture, though once again it needs
to be stressed that the 'folk' are not those of the backwater, but a
national folk with whom we all identify, to a greater or lesser degree,
at some time or another.

3. Motivation "Man can adapt somehow to anything his imagination can cope
with, but he cannot deal with chaos... Therefore our most important assets
are always the symbols of our general orientation in nature, on the earth,
in society and in whatever we are doing."[146] The mythic grows out of
man's fear of chaos. On the one hand it is expressive of the solidarity
gained in communion, though not as Durkheim would have it, its exclusive
product. On the other hand it grows out of a desire to make enough sense
of the world in order to stem the panic engendered by the unknown. "Every
human order", argues Peter Berger, "is a community in the face of death."[147]

The mythic, in a certain sense, is a literal response to such feelings. It
may well use, and depend on, as C.G.Jung and Sigmund Freud argue, the
particular structure and contents of the unconscious. For Jung the purpose
of rite and dogma was clear; they were dams and walls to keep back the
dangers of the unconscious.[148] And for Freud the common symbolism of myth
and dreams was evidence of the workings of this, perhaps even mythic level
of the psyche.[149] Geza Roheim uses his Freudianism also to see in myth and
folktale a response to archaic feelings of guilt and anxiety; "In the folktale
we relate how we overcome the anxiety connected with the 'bad parents' and
grew up; in myth we confess that only death can end the tragic ambivalence of

human nature.   Eros triumphs in the folktale.   Thanatos in the
myth."[150]

Indeed all those theories of the mythic which have emotion as their

base perceive it as a response to some dark layer of man's existence,

be it internalized, in the psyche, or externalized, in the natural

world.   For Mircea Eliade, as we have seen, myth is a response to the

terror of history and to pain and suffering.[151]   Aspects of the world,

beyond control, are made bearable and hence controllable through accounts

which can only succeed in their consistency and persistence.   The mythic

is motivated by a desire to reduce the ambiguity and uncertainty of the

raw world and to replace it in consciousness and in lived relations, by

a structure of minimum viability which guarantees the integrity and

reality of human existence.   The fact that this was a symbolic structure,

a mediation, an idealization, did not mean that it was false, as for

example Jurgen Habermas seems to think.   "In primitive stages of

social development, the problems of survival - and thus man's experiences

of contingency in dealing with outer nature -were so drastic that they had

to be counterbalanced by the narrative production of an illusion of order,

as can be clearly seen in the content of myth."[152]   That illusion is

such only because these creations cannot eradicate the uncertainty or

contingency of the world which prompted them; but insofar as they

generate the conditions for a more or less ordered and secure world

then they are as close to the real as human beings will ever reach.

So the perception of the mythic as being logical, in a concrete,

non-Aristotelian sense, is one which itself is persuasive.   Myth is,

in part, a response to and a necessary resolution of the arbitrary;

it cannot just produce it.   It must combine, therefore, the emotional

and the rational, and both are needed to explain it, just as both are

needed to explain man.   The logic is concrete, it uses the natural

world, because as Lévy-Bruhl argues, the mythic imagination is at one with the world. Economic and social contiguity with nature is both reproduced and supported by narrative contiguity.

We meet arguments which are ultimately to do with motivation in the context of television research, both in the notion of escape and in the concept of uses and gratifications; perjorative/anti-perjorative and functions respectively. As Elihu Katz and David Foulkes[153] suggest this research follows the question "what do people do with the media", and the answer is something like this:"....everday roles in modern society give rise to tension or drives (stemming from alienation or felt deprivation) which lead one to high exposure to mass media with its characteristic context.... and its characteristic content (e.g. fantasy) from which via psychological processes such as identification one can obtain compensatory gratification and, perhaps, an unanticipated consequence, "narcotization" of other role obligations." Here media of mass communication, though not granted exclusively dysfunctional roles, nevertheless are studied in terms of the drives which make fantasy both necessary and appropriate.[154]

4. Function "The function of myth, in short, is to stabilize the existing regime, to afford infallible precedents for practice and procedure, and to place on an unassailable foundation the general rule of conduct, traditional institutions and the sentiments controlling social behaviour and religious belief... myth is not aetiological but fidejussive. Its business is not to satisfy curiosity but to confirm the faith. It is here to cater, not for the speculative man with his 'why', but for the practical man with his 'how' if not then?" [155]

Arguments about function, which are or should be social, inevitably grow out of assumptions about motivation.[156] The mythic therefore is seen as a containment of the irrational, a justification of what passes for the rational, a protection against the unknown and the different. The mythic connection with violence has often been noted.[157] Its continual restatement of origin; its denial of empirical time and the reinstatement of real time is perceived as an aspect of its function as a legitimater of the present social order, as well as a guarantee of its future.

The mythic reinforces status.[158] It is a guide to action.[159] It is none of these things.[160] The problem of function centres on the tendency for those who consider it, Malinowski perhaps apart, to make the mythic coextensive with society, and to assume that the accounts it gives of the world are faithful to the work of lived relations and directly bear upon them. The great joy of the notion of latent function is that even when this homology is not apparent, the argument can still stand.

Equally absurd, of course, is the totalitarion theory of falsehood, equally functional, but premised on the assumption that the mythic not only holds back the natural threat but also the social threat to the existing social structre. In this sense myth is an uncritical response to a critical situation; "Myth originates whenever thought and imagination are employed uncritically or deliberately used to promote social delusion."[161]

This is, of course, an increasingly common theme, particularly in much criticism of contemporary culture. But just as much as myth cannot be treated as the be all and end all of social existence, no more can it be perceived as a permanent aberration. The Mythic, of course, is functional, but not because it is ubiquitous. On the

other hand, of course, it is often out of accord with the interests

of sections of society who would have most to gain by the transformation

of that society and a replacement of one myth by another.

Indeed mythic forms can be used precisely and paradoxically to aid

this transformation as James L. Peacock has pointed out in his

discussion of the Ludruk, the classic drama of Indonesia.[162] The

incorporation of new values and content into the old forms serves,

in this case, a number of purposes: first of all it helps both

actors and spectators to understand modernization in terms of vivid

and meaningful symbolic classifications; secondly it seduces the

participants into empathy with modes of social action involved in the

modernization process; and finally it involves the participants

aesthetically, but equally in favour of the changes being undertaken

in their society.

Here the mythic is much more than just a 'symbolic statement about the

social order',[163] but involves the more or less selfconscious manip-

ulation of traditional forms to involve those who have accepted those

forms to accept, in turn, social change. Whether this is functional or

not will depend on how one values those changes and indeed how one

measures the success of such cultural events in contributing towards

them. One cannot, easily or at all, move from descriptions about

what a myth contains to assumptions about action; nor can we posit

a one to one correlation between action and communication. Theories

of reflection, as much as theories of function, mask the very real

difficulty and complexity of such relations.

Nevertheless of all aspects of culture, the mythic will be the closest

to a heartland of belief, thought and action. Prompted, as I have

argued by a desire for order and control, it attempts, in thought

and deed, to generate just that.[164] But it may be, and increasingly is,

only one solution to that need and to the problems associated with it.

Once again arguments about the function of television parrot those about

myth; often critical, though not always so, they stress the role television,

cap in hand, plays to the institutions of the state and of society as a

whole.[165] This seems at least as far as a centralised medium of mass commun-

ication is concerned, unremarkable, though we may not like the way of it.

But it is, I think, in the final analysis, also misconceived. The relation-

ship between television and society, just as the relationship between myth

and society, is not simply functional, if by that we mean essentially and

necessarily preservative of existing institutions. Indeed, whatever notion

of function we use, substantial questions about the nature of television

remain. This is an issue to which I shall return in the final section of

the thesis.

5. **Framing** The response which the mythic offers to these cultural problems

is therefore particular. I have already suggested that although myths are

not necessarily or exclusively sacred tales, they nevertheless constitute

the marked element in culture. By that I mean that the mythic is a form

of expression that is both different from and at the same time similar to,

as well as distant from and close to, the world of every day experience.

The move from that world to the world of the mythic involves a transformation,

the crossing of a boundary, the entering of, in Victor Turner's terminology,

a liminal dimension.[166] Its sacred nature is not therefore objectively given

by the presence of gods or the exclusive preoccupation with things cosmic,

but solely in that movement from one clearly defined domain to another.

The passage is both illuminating and modifying of normal experience. And this

is so because in the mythic, both in myth and in ritual, it is the patterning

of experience that is made manifest; the coherence of experience becomes

explicit. As I pointed out in the first, introductory, chapter, the mythic

consists in a framed reality.[167] The notion of a frame surrounding the work

of art and marking it off from an otherwise undifferentiated background, is

relatively modern. As Meyer Schapiro writes: "Apparently it was
late in the second millenium B.C. (if even then) before one thought of a
continuous isolating frame around an image: a homogenous enclosure like
a city wall.... The frame belongs to...the space of the observer rather
than of the illusory, three dimensional world disclosed within and behind.
It is a finding and focussing device placed between the observer and the
image."[168] The frame, in its metaphorical sense - in television of course
it is both - is just this finding and focussing device, and there are
at least three dimensions to the frame of the mythic.

First of all we can identify the social aspect. The frame here is a spatial
and temporal boundary which separates the mundane from the sacred. Those
who enter this sacred time and space are entering an emotionally toxic
world of familiarity and risk, in which they are expected to suspend disbelief
and accept for the time being a heightened set of categorical imperatives.[169]

On entering they are faced with a form of communication with displaces their
own, which denies or alters their normal perceptions of space and time. The
narrative of a myth or drama contracts or expands temporal sequences at will.
As Mircea Eliade among others notes, mythic time is forever present. Space
too is transformed; it is always here. In the metaphor and metonymy of
sympathetic magic distances are transcended.[170] In the mythic, cause too is
transcendent. Motivation, empirical connection - both are relegated to the
search for perfection and equilibrium of an ordered play. "To be perfect an
ending must be perfectly prepared for."[171] And 'play', here, is play in both
its senses, that of drama and that of voluntary, superfluous, enjoyment in
Jan Huizinga's sense. Play is distinct from ordinary life - and like ritual
that distinction is marked by time and by place and by a distinct order.
"Inside the playground an absolute and peculiar order reigns. Here we come
across another, very positive feature of play: it creates order, is order.
Into an imperfect world and into the confusion of life it brings a
temporary, a limited perfection. Play demands order absolute and
supreme."[172] We are to be reminded also that the word stage has a

temporal, spatial and active reference.

The third sense of frame refers to the content of the mythic:
Suzanne Langer's "strongest light and deepest darkness".[173]
The content itself is marked off and distinct,though not entirely,for the
simultaneity of distance and proximity must be maintained and articulated.
The content is the product on the one hand of a synesthesia: the
mythic is a communication in which differences of perspective, of
emotion, of sensibility are united into a plurivocal text.[174] And
on the other it speaks of balance between its elements and between
their referents beyond the myth; in this sense the content of the
myth speaks of the particular ambition.... "to reach the threshold,
undoubtedly the most profitable to human societies, of a just
equilibrium between their unity and their diversity; and to maintain
an equal balance between communication, favouring reciprocal
illuminations - and absence of communication, also beneficial - since
the fragile flowers of difference need half-light in order to exist."[175]

Television is the frame _par excellence_ of our culture; it shares with
ritual as Mary Douglas points out[176] the capacity to redirect and to
redraft perception and experience; not for ever certainly, but for
the duration. Within and through the frame, perhaps, Henri Bergson's
famous notion of 'growing old together' (La durée) is for the time
being annulled.[177]

6. Mediation   I prefer the notion of mediation to that of transformation,
                                            that
because while it makes obvious sense to recognize/the mythic is often
a world of topsy-turveydom,[178] it need not be, and I want to stress
now, and in the next section that the mythic is essentially a bridge
between man in his everyday existence and both the natural and super-
natural world which bounds that existence. "Mythological thought
operates within the continuity between the human world and the world

of the gods. Theological thought serves to mediate between the two worlds, precisely because their original continuity now appears broken."[179]   Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann echo Lévy-Bruhl's recognition that myths themselves are secondary, the product of a self-consciousness which is absent in mythical thought itself. The mythic, of which I have been talking, is much closer to the theological of Berger and Luckmann.

In a defintion of the mythic which looks to Mircea Eliade and to Arnold Van Gennep, Victor Turner stresses its mediatory position and function.   The mythic is the domain of the liminal, which paradoxically from our point of view stresses the ambiguous and the fluid, rather than their resolution. "The attributes of liminality and of liminal personae (threshold people) are necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and those persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space.   Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arranged by law, custom, concentration , and ceremonial. As such, their ambiguous and indeterminate attributes are expressed by a rich variety of symbols in the many societies that ritualize social and cultural transitions."[180]
Myths are liminal phenomena: "...they are felt to be high or deep mysteries which put the initiand temporarily into close rapport with the primary or primordial generative powers of the cosmos, threats of which transcend rather than transgress the norms of human secular society.   In myth is a limitless freedom, and/ a symbolic freedom of action which is denied to the norm bound incumbent of a status in a social structure.   Liminality is pure potency."[181]

Mediation is the dynamic within the mythic. We need not accept

entirely Turner's characterisation for it denies, though his work

often seems to incorporate, the angular logic of an intellectualist

perception of myth; and this seems necessary both in terms of a

definition of the myth and also in order for us to understand the

mythology of others. With the notion of mediation, however, this

discussion of myth and the mythic comes full circle. Whether

conceived in terms of symbolic function or totemic operator,[182] or in

terms of the liminality of Mircea Eliade and Victor Turner, the

mythic is the site where chaos and order, past, future and present,

reason and emotion meet, if only momentarily. It is the nature of

this meeting, one which unites television with the mythic as I have

presented it, which I want to consider in the next and final section

of this chapter.

VI

In order to do this effectively I want to return to some considerations

which I presented in the first chapter, and in particular to the notion

of commonsense. "Commonsense knowledge is the knowledge I share with

others in the normal, self-evident matrices of everyday life."[183]

And for Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, and indeed for Alfred Schutz,

the commonsense world is the taken for granted, typical world of you

or I in our daily existence. We are wide awake in it, It is

ordered and objective. It is the domain of the 'here' of my body

and the 'now' of my present. "What is 'here and now' presented

to us in everyday life is the realissimum of my consciousness."[184]

It is intersubjective; I share it with others. It is unproblematic

until further notice, that is until, quite tautologically, it becomes

problematic. Commonsense is bounded by finite worlds of meaning.

I am excluded from these by my involvement in the everyday world
and in order to make them accessible to me as a member, I have to
translate their particularities into my own. Everyday language
does this for me. "Typically, therefore, I distort the reality
of the latter as soon as I begin to use the common language in
interpreting them, that is I 'translate' the non-everyday experience
back into the paramount reality of everyday life."[185] Commonsense
is sedimentary; it contains within it the accumulated experiences
of man faced with similar problems at different times.

Perhaps, as hard as it is for a member of the everyday world to under-
stand the reality of finite worlds surrounding him the reverse is also
true. Specialized, and by that I mean in this context at least,
sociological, conceptions of the commonsense world are both infrequent
and apparently ill-informed. Berger and Luckmann, for all their
sensitivity, produce an unevenly eclectic account of an abstract
social process.[186] Elsewhere considerations of commonsense have
been judgemental. And clearly within any self-conscious Marxism
the view of the unselfconscious man in the street is likely to be
condemnatory.[187]

Among these ,perhaps the most interesting is the account given of
commonsense by Antonio Gramsci in The Prison Notebooks.[188]
Gramsci makes a distinction between commonsense and good sense, the
former is "not rigid and immobile, but is continually transforming
itself, enriching itself with scientific ideas and with philosophical
opinions which have entered ordinary life."[189] The latter, 'good
sense', is the particularly philosophical element of commonsense,
practical, empirical, and which deserves to be 'made more unitary
and coherent'.[190]

"Commonsense is not a single unique conception, identical
in time and space. It is the 'folklore'of philosophy,
and, like folklore, it takes countless different forms.
Its most fundamental characteristic is that it is a conception
which, even in the brain of one individual, is fragmentary,
incoherent and inconsequential, in conformity with the
social and cultural position of those masses whose philosophy
it is. At those times in history when a homogeneous social
group is brought into being, there comes into being also,
in opposition to commonsense, a homogeneous - in other words
coherent and systematic - philosophy." 191

Commonsense, for Gramsci, therefore, has a certain coherence, as

well as its fragmentary quality; it is material because it is

grounded in the experience of social existence; it contains within

it residues of previously held beliefs and opinions, and indeed the

relationship between religion and commonsense is a close one.

Philosophy, an intellectual form of thought, supercedes both. [192]

Commonsense and folklore are coexistent: "Commonsense creates

the folklore of the future, that is as a relatively rigid phase

of popular knowledge at a given place and time." [193]

These considerations, despite the different valuation, accord very

well with the implicit model of commonsense I outlined in the first

chapter, in which commonsense was conceived as a form of knowledge

grounded in the everyday world and bounded by other forms of knowledge

and non-knowledge with which it has to maintain a relationship.

Traditionally that relationship has been articulated through the

mythic; contemporarily it is articulated through the media of

mass communication, pre-eminently television. A Venn diagram

might make this more clear:

PARTICULAR
KNOWLEDGE

REASON

COMMONSENSE

SHADED AREA
= THE MYTHIC

EMOTION

NON
KNOWLEDGE
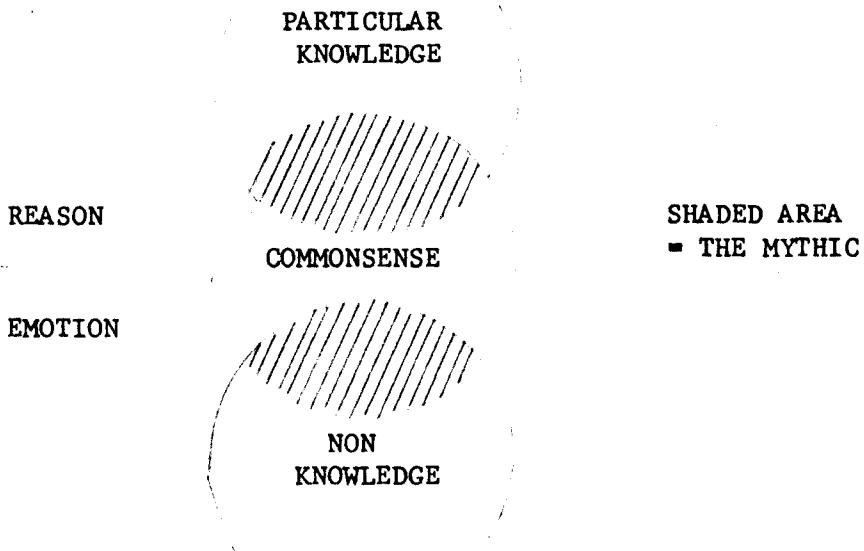
FIGURE I: MYTH AND COMMONSENSE

Commonsense here is core knowledge.   Grounded in man's material

experience of the everyday it defines and is the product of the

everyday's typicality.   With commonsense, we get through or

get by, admittedly in a parochial way, but with a parochiality which

is universal, as are the problems with which it has to deal.

Commonsense is taken for granted, but it need not be unconscious,

and of course its consciousness may not coincide with that of

critical reason, but that is another matter.   Indeed the judgements

about it, mirror those judgements against primitive thought of

which, in its ethnocentrism, the nineteenth century

was so fond.[194]   It is none the less logical and adequate for its

task.   Commonsense is bounded, one might even say surrounded, by

aspects of human existence which are not intrinsically available to

it, and with whose juxtaposition life becomes uncertain and ambiguous.

On the one hand there is the domain of what we might call non-knowledge:

the natural for the primitive, the unknowable, the unpredictable,

the uncontrollable.   On the other hand there are the various and

often competing specialist accounts of the world,as often as not

of that world of the unknowable which itself is unknown, unpredictable

and uncontrollable from the point of view of commonsense.   Where these

three zones overlap we find the domain of the mythic.   The mythic bridges,

mediates and translates the unknown and the unknowable into terms which

are accessible and forms which are familiar.   For Clifford Geertz this

boundary is essential to an understanding of the cultural significance of

ritual [195] : "A man, even large groups of men, may be aesthetically in-

sensitive, religiously unconcerned and inequipped to pursue full scientific

analysis, but he cannot be completely lacking in commonsense and survive.

The dispositions which religious rituals induce, then, have their most im-

portant impact - from a human point of view - outside the boundaries of

ritual itself as they reflect back to colour the individual's conception

of the established world of bare fact."   The mythic frames the world of

commonsense and it concentrates the mind wonderfully.

Although the distinction is a relative rather than an absolute one, it is

clear that the two dimensions of the mythic, the cognitive and effective ,

each have their place in this model.   The mythic boundary between the

particular forms of knowledge and commonsense is essentially a cognitive one;

reason is the transformer;   the appeal is to the intellect. And equally

the mythic boundary between non-knowledge (the world of nature) and common-

sense is essentially an affective one;   emotion is the transformer and the

appeal is to feeling.

Indeed the various forms of television programmes, the news, the documentary,

the drama and the entertainment show can be placed within this model and

distinguished, quite simply, through it. Each form articulates its own

mix of familiarity and novelty and each mediates in a different mode across

the divide into the world of commonsense. Most distinct are the documentary

and the entertainment show, the former predominantly appealing to the

intellect, the latter to the emotions. Drama and news are more equivocal

forms and more complex, though I suggest there is more reason than emotion

in the news, while the reverse is true of drama - there is more emotion

than reason.

The drama, with which I shall be concerned in this thesis is to be clearly

demarcated, at least in the eyes of the producers, from the documentary;

the audience is to know that drama is not real.[196]   Freed, therefore,

from the constraints of direct portrayal, but nevertheless constrained

by memory and ephemerality, (a drama is not memorable because it is true), a

television drama is the narrative form par excellence. In serial or soap box

as well as in the isolated play, but particularly in the former, the novelty

of character and style is firmly locked into the familiarity of plot.[197] Here

the myth is in the logic of expression, the excitement of event and the

control of expectation. Its content is the content of direct experience,

though heightened, transformed, given prestige; violence, love and sex,

the family, work, life and death. Emotion rules reason. As I have

suggested drama is to be distinguished most clearly from documentary;

television knows it: "...it is essential that the nature and purpose of

every programme should be made clear to everybody. Not only must the

audience know that they are watching a documentary as opposed to a play;

they must know that it is a documentary which sets out to do this or that,

and to do it from certain standpoints only... And since the audience must

be in no doubt about such things, this must usually be said more than once".[198]

Documentary is not reality of course; it is a translation of reality and as often as not the esoteric or presumed esoteric reality of others.[199] But documentary treats of particular knowledge and particular worlds - the scientific, aesthetic or political - and it does so in an attempt to broaden horizons of everyday culture. It is an equivocal task - for the boundary remains both despite and because of such attempts; the documentary is the site of intellectual liminality, where the categories of, for example, science, are blurred and those of the everyday extended, and where the result is/a prestigious illusion of understanding. This is myth also; because the illusion is inevitable and necessary, just as in drama the solutions it offers are impossible. Narrative though in different degrees, and probably in different ways, underlines both.
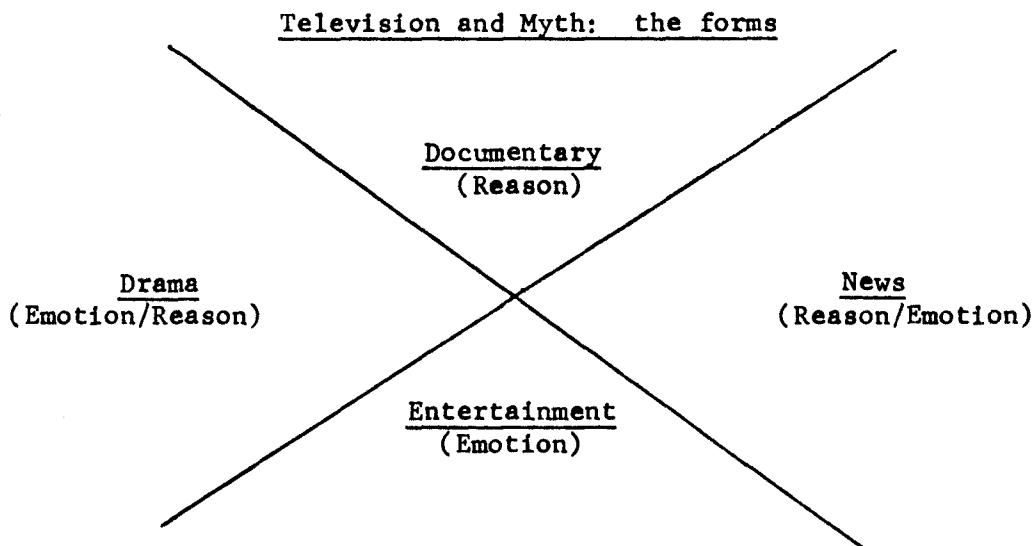
I have less to say about the news and the light entertainment show. The news with its formulae and its persistence is much studied though not always in a particularly enlightening way;[200] it consists in fragments of narrative and its fragmentary quality masks its forms. Here above all is revealed television's engine of transformation as the novelty of origin, of distance, of size and of conflict are made amenable and manageable in time (News at Ten) and space (Here is the News). News is drama reversed; the chronology of narrative is shattered and the categorial logic of the mythic system assumes dominance. News is reason over emotion.

The show is pure emotion, pure entertainment and the constraints of song, dance and the joke reach out to the edge of ritual, for our participation is necessarily intense but impotent. The mystery, however, is intense, and it is perhaps in the show, above all, that television creates its own canon of stars and idols.[201] The content of the show is itself close and familiar; indeed in light entertainment nothing is new except its style. This very familiarity demands therefore its heroes, and its

extravagance: what is near is pushed away; in the news what is far away

is brought home.

Figure II

Television and Myth: the forms

Documentary
(Reason)

Drama
(Emotion/Reason)

News
(Reason/Emotion)

Entertainment
(Emotion)

Television therefore can be understood as a mythic phenomenon

essentially because through it we of the profane world have access

to something which, in its unmediated state, and by its very

distance, is sacred. We may not, as individuals, be particularly

anxious about problems of science or aesthetics on the one hand, or

of life, death and identity on the other, but our culture, like

any other, is. Television betrays the other, while at the same

time preserving it. Its particular intensity is that of a synaesthetic

experience of sight, sound and touch; it defines the location, where

in drama or in documentary, our own world is open to the reassuring

challenge of magic and enchantment. And indeed that experience is

a communal one; we are participants and not just patients; and this

is so through our participation in the entirety of television's

culture, through newspapers, magazines, and in conversation. The

mythic world of television demands a response which it itself conditions

and constrains. It does not exist without us.

This characterisation is, in a sense, overly poetic. Therefore
the remainder of the thesis, in exploring the structures of drama,
seeks to give it some substance. More work is needed before a full
understanding of the other forms of television will be reached. But
it is hoped this framework will be useful. Television, I suggest,
should be given a significance which transcends the immediate and which
despite its appearance, locks its participants in a communication which
preserves, integrates, and legitimises, not only our own society, but
the continuity of human, cultural existence. In this sense it is
mythic.

Chapter 3. Footnotes and References

1.   For example see: Roland Barthes, Mythologies. London. 1972;
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2.   see for example Bronislaw Malinowski. Magic, Science and Religion.
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      esp. 28. I have found G.S. Kirk's study to be especially valuable
      in approaching and understanding much of the literature on myth.
      Many of the arguments which follow in this chapter have been informed
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3.   On the problems of cross-cultural analysis, see especially the papers
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10. idem, The Raw and the Cooked. op. cit. 10.

11. Roger Silverstone, Ernst Cassirer and Claude Lévi-Strauss.
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    p. 63.

14. Peter Worsley. Groote Eylandt Totemism and Le Totémisme
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    op. cit.

15. G.S. Kirk, op. cit. 265.

16. Cassirer, op. cit. 24.

17. ibid. 8, 75.

18. ibid. 89, 104, 106, 143.

19. ibid. 104.

20. ibid. (15)

21. Ernst Cassirer, An Essay on Man. op. cit. 179; cf. David Bidney,
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    465-544. esp. 522.

22. M.F. Ashley-Montague, Cassirer on Mythological Thinking. in P.A. Schilpp, op. cit. 359-378. p. 367.

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30. How Natives Think. op. cit. 76-77.

31. ibid. 78.

32. Primitive Mentality. op. cit. 437-9.

33. ibid. (p. 469)

34. ibid. p. 445.

35. ibid. cf. Robin Horton, African Traditional Thought and Western Science, in M.F.D. Young, Knowledge and Control. London. 1971. 208-266.

36. How Natives Think. op. cit. p. 78: "It is not anti-logical, it is not alogical either. By designating it 'prelogical', I merely wish to state that it does not bind itself down, as our thought does, to avoiding contradictions. It obeys the law of participation first and foremost. Thus oriented it does not expressly delight in what is contradictory (which would make it merely absurd in our eyes), but neither does it take pains to avoid it. It is often wholly indifferent to it, and that makes it so hard to follow." see also Primitive Mentality. op. cit. 444.

37. How Natives Think. op. cit. 368.

38. ibid. 366.

39. ibid. 370. cf. Jean Cazeneuve. op. cit. 18. "It can happen certainly, that myths help to explain what is, but such is not their primary function. They reflect the supernatural and they have a value which is at one and the same time transcendental and life-giving."

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41. ibid. 373.

42. La Mentalité Primitive. op. cit. 26.

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53. Myth and Reality. op. cit. 80-2.

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55. The Myth of the Eternal Return. op. cit. 98.

56. Images and Symbols. op. cit. 18: "...the life of modern man is
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    the matrices of his imagination; a quantity of mythological litter
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64. Totemism. op. cit. p. 140.

65. In a sense the present task is impossible without the future one,
    for myth, as we shall see, is defined operationally and an
    understanding of in what that operation consists depends principally
    on consideration of his method.

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70. inter alia: Peter Munz. When the Golden Bough Breaks. London
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    Shalvey, Claude Lévi-Strauss. Social Psychotherapy and the Collective
    Unconscious. Hassocks, Sussex. 1979.

71. Structural Anthropology. Vol. 1. op. cit. 210.

72. op. cit. 209.

73. The Story of Asdiwal. op. cit.; The Origin of Table Manners. op. cit.
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74. G.S. Kirk, Myth, Its Meaning and Function. op. cit. 71.

75. The Origin of Table Manners. op. cit. 396.

76. ibid. 468.

77. From Honey to Ashes. op. cit. 473.

78. Structural Anthropology. Vol. 1. op. cit. 230.

79. Edmund Leach, Ritual. International Encyclopedia of the Social
    Sciences. 536.

80. Ruth Benedict, Ritual. Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences. 396-7.

81. op. cit.

82. Sir James Frazer, The Golden Bough. One volume Abridged Edition.
    London. 1949. p. 48 ff. (see also idem. Adonis, Attis, Osiris.
    London. 1906. quoted by G.S. Kirk, op. cit. p. 12.)

83. Sir Edward Tylor. The Origins of Culture. (Part 1 of Primitive
    Culture. 1871.) New York. 1952. p. 23-3: "(Those) who will

give their minds to master the general principles of savage religion will never again think it ridiculous, or the knowledge of it superfluous, to the rest of mankind. Far from its beliefs and practices being a rubbish-heap of miscellaneous folly, they are consistent and logical in so high a degree as to begin, as soon as even roughly classified, to display the principle of their formation and development, and these principles prove to be essentially rational, though working in a mental condition of intense and inveterate ignorance."

84. Sir James Frazer, op. cit. p. 49: "The fatal flaw of magic lies not in its general assumption of a sequence of events determined by law, but in its total misconception of the nature of the particular laws which govern that sequence. If we analyse (the) various codes of sympathetic magic...we shall find...that they are all mistaken applications of one or other of two great fundamental laws of thought, namely, the association of ideas by similarity and the association of ideas by contiguity in space or time...The principles of association are excellent in themselves, and indeed absolutely essential to the working of the human mind. Legitimately applied they yield science; illegitimately applied they yield magic, the bastard sister of science." For a contemporary reflection on this hypothesis see Edmund Leach. Culture and Communication. Cambridge. 1976.

85. Bronislaw Malinowski, op. cit. 139-140.

86. ibid. 107-8

87. ibid. 84.

88. ibid. 96-7.

89. ibid. 101.

90. ibid. 146.

91. op. cit.

92. Ruth Benedict. op. cit. 396-7.

93. Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. op. cit. p. 34.

94. E.E. Evans Pritchard, Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande. Oxford. 1937.

95. Jack Goody. Religion and Ritual. The Definitional Problem. British Journal of Sociology. XII No. 2. June 1961. 142-164. p. 155.

96. Edmund Leach, Political Systems of Highland Burma. London. 1970. p. 13; cf. idem. Culture and Communication. op. cit. p. 35.

97. Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures. London. 1975. p. 112.; Jack Goody, op. cit. p. 160.

98. André Martinet, Elements of General Linguistics. London. 1964.

99.   Jack Goody, op. cit.; cf. Marcel Mauss. Oeuvres. 3 Vols. Paris. 1968-70. Vol. II. p. 150-1: "...il y a toujours à côte d'une logique imposée, préalable, animiste, quelque fois, une autre valeur. C'est valeur 'commune' car qui dit symbole dit signifiaction commune par les individus - naturellement groupé - qui acceptent ce symbole qui ont choisi plus òu moins arbitrairement, mais avec unanimité, une onomatopée, une rite, une croyance, un mode de travail en commun, un thème musical, une danse. Il y a en dont accord un vérité subjective en un vérité objective; et, dans toute séquence d'accords symboliques, un minimum de réalité, à savoir la coordination de ces accords."

100.   Max Gluckman, Essays on the Ritual of Social Relations. Manchester. 1962. p. 26.

101.   following Meyer Fortes. Ritual and Office in Tribal Society, in Max Gluckman, op. cit. 53-88.

102.   Max Gluckman, op. cit. p. 38.

103.   Edmund Leach, I.E.S.S. op. cit.

104.   Clyde Kluckhohn, Myths and Rituals: A General Theory. Harvard Theological Review. 142. Vol. 35. 45-79. p. 57.

105.   G.S. Kirk. op. cit. p. 25.

106.   Terence Turner, Oedipus: Time and Structure in Narrative Form. in R.F.Spencer (Ed.), Forms of Symbolic Action. Proceedings of the 1969 Annual Spring Meeting of the American Ethnological Society. Seattle. 126-68: "Symbolic narratives, in short, represent cultural models for coping with typical patterns of subjective stress involved in the orientation of individuals to problematic situations in their social and cultural orders. They are, in a sense, meta-categories dealing with the reintegration of divergent and often traumatic individual experience with the narrative order of categories. The specific vehicle of this underlying message is the narrative itself, as a syntactic framework for the synthesis of time or diachrony (manifested as a combination of structural disorder and contradiction with the experience of individual protagonists) and synchrony (manifested in the underlying formulae which constrain the flux of the event in the narrative structure of social categories).

107.   Clifford Geertz, Ideology as a Cultural System. in idem., The Interpretation of Cultures. op. cit. 87-125.

108.   Marcel Mauss, A General Theory of Magic. London. 1972. p. 60.

109.   Culture and Communication, op. cit. p. 45; cf. inter alia, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology. Vol. 2. op. cit. Relations of Symmetry Between the Ritual and Myths of Neighbouring Peoples. p. 238-255.

110.   Claude Lévi-Strauss, ibid. p. 254.

111.   Culture and Communication. op. cit. passim; cf. also Eleazor Meletinsky, From Myth to Folktale. Diogenes. 99 Fall 1977. 103-124 and below.

112. Arnold van Gennep, <u>Rites of Passage</u>. London. 1960. p. 191.

113. <u>ibid</u>. p. 11.

114. <u>ibid</u>. p. 12.

115. <u>ibid</u>. p. 36.

116. <u>ibid</u>. p. 26.

117. Edmund Leach, Two Essays concerning the Symbolic Representation of Time. <u>op. cit</u>. p. 134.

118. e.g. Franz Boas, <u>Race, Language and Culture</u>. London. 1940.; Ruth Benedict. <u>Myth</u>. <u>op. cit</u>.; Stith Thompson. <u>The Folktale</u>. Berkeley. 1977.

119. G.S. Kirk. <u>op. cit</u>. p. 41.

120. Claude Lévi-Strauss, <u>Structural Anthropology</u>. 11. <u>op. cit</u>. 128.

121. <u>The Folktale</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. p. 10.

122. The Development of Folktales and Myths, in <u>op. cit</u>. p. 405.

123. <u>op. cit</u>. p. 173.

124. <u>The Folktale</u> <u>op. cit</u>. p. 456. and see Chapter 7 below.

125. G.S. Kirk <u>op. cit</u>. p. 37.

126. <u>ibid</u>. p. 40.

127. Jack Zipes, <u>Breaking the Magic Spell</u>. <u>op. cit</u>.

128. Eleazor Meletinsky, Structural-Typological Study of the Folktale. <u>Genre</u>. Vol. IV. September 1971. 249-279.

129. Vladimir Propp, <u>Morphology of the Folktale</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. p. 90.

130. Claude Lévi-Strauss, La Structure et la Forme: Réflexions sur un Ouvrage de Vladimir Propp. <u>Cahiers de i'Institut de Science Economique Appliquée</u>. No. 99. Mar. 1960. (Serie M no. 7.) p. 3-36. (Translated in <u>Structural Anthropology</u>. Vol. 2. <u>op. cit</u>. 115-145 it is to this translation that subsequent page references relate.) Propp answered Lévi-Strauss in the Italian edition of the work, to which unfortunately I do not have access, and Lévi-Strauss in turn replied in <u>Structural Anthropology</u> Vol. 2. <u>op. cit</u>. p. 128.

131. <u>op. cit</u>.

132. From Myth to Folktale. <u>op. cit</u>.

133. <u>ibid</u>. p. 105. cf. A.J. Greimas, <u>Sémantique Structurale</u>. Paris. 1966. and Chapter 4 below.

134. From Myth to Folktale. op. cit. p. 111; cf. Géza Roheim, Myth and Folklore. American Imago. Vol. 2. 1941. 256-279: "In a myth the actions are mostly divine and sometimes human. In a folktale the dramatis personae are mostly human and especially the hero is human frequently with supernatural beings as his opponents. In myth we have a definite locality; in a folktale the actions are nameless, the scene is just anywhere. A myth is part of a creed; it is believed by the narrator. The folktale is purely fiction and not intended to be anything else....A folktale is a narrative with a happy end, a myth is a tragedy; a god must die before he can be divine."

135. From Myth to Folktale. op. cit. p. 112-3.

136. cf. Marshall Sahlins, Culture and Practical Reason. Chicago. 1976, and in a more polemical vein, Hannah Arendt, Society and Culture, in Norman Jacobs. Culture for the Millions: Mass Media in Modern Society. New York. 1963. 43-52.

137. cf. Umberto Eco. The Narrative Structure in Fleming, in Oreste del Buono and Umberto Eco, (Eds.) The Bond Affair. London. 1966. 35-75; Roland Barthes, The Pleasure of the Text. London. 1976.

138. see footnote 156, Chapter 2 above.

139. The Origin of Table Manners. op. cit. (p. 130)

140. Roman Jakobson. On Russian Fairytales. op. cit. p. 192; "The folktale is a typical collective property. The socialised sections of mental culture, for instance language or folktale, are subject to much stricter and more uniform laws than fields in which individual creation prevails." cf. Marcel Mauss op. cit. above.

141. G.S. Kirk. op. cit. 34.

142. Folktales are conservative: cf. Umberto Eco. The Narrative Structure in Fleming. op. cit. p. 61: "...any fable is conservative; it is the static direct dogmatic conservatism of fairy tales and myth which transmit as elementary wisdom contracted and communicated by a simple play of light and shade, and they transmit it by indestructible images which do not permit critical distinction."; for a discussion of these issues see Chapter 7 below, and Salvador Giner and Roger Silverstone, Innovation, Domination and Communion. Mimeo. 1979.

143. cf. Colin McArthur, Television and History. London. 1978.

144. On the traditionality of the audience's pattern of watching, see G.J. Goodhardt, A.S.C. Ehrenberg, M.A. Collins. The Television Audience. Farnborough. 1975.

145. Robert Redfield, The Little Community and Peasant Society and Culture. Chicago. 1960; James C. Scott, Protest and Profanation. Theory and Society. 1977. Vol. 4. No. 1. 1-38, Vol. 4. No. 2. 211-246.

146. Suzanne Langer, Philosophy in a New Key. Oxford. 1951.
     p. 287.

147. Peter Berger. The Social Reality of Religion. op. cit.
     p. 80.

148. C.G. Jung. The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious.
     op. cit. p. 47.

149. Sigmund Freud. The Interpretation of Dreams. op. cit. 46-8.

150. Géza Roheim. Myth and Folktale. op. cit. p. 279.

151. op. cit. passim. but especially The Myth of the Eternal Return.
     op. cit. Ch. 3.

152. Legitimation Crisis. op. cit. p. 119.

153. Elihu Katz and David Foulkes. On the Use of the Mass Media as
     'Escape': Clarification of a Concept. Public Opinion Quarterly.
     1962. Vol. 26. 2. 377-388; see also the papers in Jay G.
     Blumler and Elihu Katz. The Uses of Mass Communication. Beverley
     Hills. 1974. esp. Elihu Katz, Jay G. Blumler and Michael
     Gurevitch. Utilization of Mass Communication by the Individual.
     19-32; Elihu Katz, Michael Gourevitch and Hadassah Ha as. On the
     Use of the Mass Media for Important Things. American Sociological
     Review. 1973. Vol. 38. April. 164-181.

154. see especially Paul L. Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton, Mass
     Communication, Popular Taste and Organized Social Action. in
     Wilbur Schramm, (Ed.) Mass Communications. Urbana. 2nd edition.
     1960. 492-512.

155. E.O. James, The Nature and Function of Myth. Folklore. 1957 Vol.
     68 No. 4. 474-482. 477.

156. Clyde Kluckhohn, Myth and Rituals. op. cit. p. 76-7 for his
     comments on the Navajo.

157. Pierre Girard, Violence and the Sacred. Baltimore 1977; J.S.R.
     Goodlad, A Sociology of Popular Drama. op. cit.

158. Max Gluckman, op. cit.

159. e.g. Will Wright, Sixguns and Society. op. cit. 187.

160. Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures. op. cit. 448;
     "What sets the cockfight apart from the ordinary course of life,
     lifts it from the realm of everyday practical affairs, and surrounds
     it with an aura of estranged importance is not, as functionalist
     sociology would have it, that it reinforces status distinctions
     (such reinforcement is hardly necessary in a society where every
     act proclaims them), but that it provides a metasocial commentary
     upon the whole matter of assorting human beings into fixed hierarchi-
     cal ranks and then organising the major part of collective existence
     around that assortment. Its function, if you want to call it that,
     is interpretive; it is a Balinese reading of Balinese experience,
     a story they tell themselves about themselves."

161. David Bidney, Myth, Symbolism and Truth in Thomas A. Sebeok, (Ed.) Myth: A Symposium. Bloomington. 1958. 3-23.

162. James L. Peacock, Rites of Modernisation. Chicago. 1968.; cf. Richard T. Salisbury, Structuring Ignorance. The Genesis of a Myth in New Guinea. Anthropologica. N.S. VIII. No. 2. 1966. 315-328.

163. Edmund Leach, Political Systems of Highland Burma. op. cit. p. 14. :

164. for a totally different perspective, Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment. op. cit.

165. see inter alia: C.R. Wright, Mass Communication. A Sociological Perspective. Random House. 1959; idem. Functional Analysis and Mass Communication. Public Opinion Quarterly. 24. 1960. 605-620; Functional Analysis and Mass Communication Revisited, in Jay G. Blumler and Elihu Katz. op. cit. 197-212; Melvin de Fleur and Sandra Ball-Rokeach, Theories of Mass Communication. 3rd Edition. New York. 1975.

166. Victor Turner, The Ritual Process. London. 1969.

167. see Chapter 1 above and Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger. Harmondsworth. 1970. 79-80.

168. Meyer Schapiro, On Some Problems in the Semiotics of Visual Art. Semiotica. 1. 1969. 223-244. p. 226.

169. cf. Johan Huizinga, Homo Ludens. London. 1970. esp. Chapter 1.

170. Sir James Frazer, The Golden Bough. op. cit. 22.

171. Kenneth Burke, Language as Symbolic Action. Berkeley. 1966. p.339.

172. Homo Ludens. op. cit. p. 29.

173. Suzanne Langer, On Cassirer's Theory of Language and Myth. op. cit. p. 390.

174. cf. James A. Boon, From Symbolism to Structuralism. New York. 1972. p. 182; and Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media. op. cit.

175. Claude Lévi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology. Vol. 2. op. cit. 255.

176. see footnote 165 above, and see also Stuart Hall, The 'Structured Communication' of Events. Birmingham. 1973 (mimeo).

177. discussed by Alfred Schutz. The Phenomenology of the Social World. London. 1972. 36 ff.

178. The world of the mythic has, as Lévi-Strauss points out, no necessary relationship of reflection with the lived in world; cf. The Story of Asdiwal op. cit.; and see also Edmune Leach, Two Essays Concerning the Symbolic Representation of Time op. cit.; Peter Burke, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe. London. 1978. esp. Chapter 7.

179. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality. Harmondsworth. 1967. 129 cf. Kenneth Burke. op. cit. p. 379: "In sum, just as the word is said by theologians to be a mediatory principle between this world and the supernatural, might words be a mediatory principle between ourselves and nature."

180. The Ritual Process. op. cit. 81.

181. Victor Turner. Myth and Symbol. International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences.

182. A parallel which I note in, Cassirer and Lévi-Strauss: Two Approaches to the Study of Myth. op. cit. 314.

183. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, op. cit. 37.

184. ibid. p. 34.

185. ibid. p. 40.

186. see, for example, the comments of Peter Hamilton, Knowledge and Social Structure. London. 1974. Chapter 9.

187. The Glasgow Media Group, Bad News. Vol. 1. London. 1976. p. 13 ff. Stuart Hall, Culture, the Media and the Ideological Effect, in James Curran, Michael Gurevitch and Janet Woollacott, (Eds.) Mass Communication and Society. London. 1977. 315-348. p. 345.

188. Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks. London. 1971.

189. ibid. p. 325.

190. ibid. p. 328.

191. ibid. p. 419.

192. ibid. p. 420.

193. ibid. p. 326. fn. 5.

194. see footnote 183 above.

195. Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures. op. cit. p. 119.

196. see footnote 198 below.

197. cf. Natan Katzman. Television Soap Operas. What's been going on Anyway? Public Opinion Quarterly. 1972. 36. 200-212; Sydney Head, Content Analysis of Television Drama Programmes. Quarterly of Film, Radio and Television. 1954. Vol. 9. 175-194; W. Lloyd Warner and William E. Henry. The Radio Day Time Serial. Genetic Psychology Monographs. Vol. 37. 1st half. Feb. 1948. 3-71.

198. Richard Cawston. et. al. Principles and Practice in Documentary Practice. B.B.C. Television Service. No date.

199. Philip Elliott, The Making of a Television Series, op. cit.;
     Dai Vaughan, Documentary Usage. London. 1976; James D. Halloran,
     Philip Elliott, Graham Murdock, Demonstrations and Communication.
     op. cit.; Michael Tracey, Yesterday's Men - a case study in
     political communication, in James Curran et al. Mass Communication
     and Society. op. cit.

200. A substantial number of recent studies here, each with their own
     bibliographies: Glasgow Media Group, Bad News. op. cit.;
     David Altheide, Creating Reality. op. cit.; Edwin Diamond, The
     Tin Kazoo. Cambridge, Mass. 1975; Stanley Cohen and Jock Young
     (Eds.), The Manufacture of News. London. 1973; Philip Schlesinger,
     Putting Reality Together. op. cit.; Richard Collins, Television
     News. London 1976; S. Hall, Ian Connell, Lidia Curti, The 'unity'
     of Current Affairs Television. op. cit.; Peter Golding and Philip
     Elliott, Making The News. Leicester. 1976.

201. Here I can refer to very little: see Richard Dyer, Light
     Entertainment. London. 1973; British Film Institute, Football
     of Television. London. 1975; Richard Dyer, The Meaning of Tom
     Jones. Working Papers in Cultural Studies. 1971. 1. 53-64;
     Edgar Morin, The Stars. Grove Press. 1960.

CHAPTER IV

On Narrative

Marshall McLuhan has argued that television must abandon the story line.
"There simply is no time for the narrative form, borrowed from earlier
print technology."[1] McLuhan's understanding of narrative is, however,
too literal.

The purpose of this, and the next two chapters, is to illustrate in what
ways television can and does tell stories, and to discuss some of the im-
plications of that facility. Indeed the process has already been begun in
my discussion of the work of Christian Metz and in the demonstration of its
usefulness for an analysis of the form of television's expression. Through
such an analysis we can begin to understand how it is that television, and
of course film, structures its texts in its particular way. This dimension
of narrative is medium specific and of course says nothing about the content
of the stories, though an understanding of it depends on a measure of that
content. The problems associated with pushing this work further are legion
and in particular they involve a minute examination of the image and its
internal structure. Such work has begun elsewhere, though hesitantly, and it
still seems unable to transcend problems both of translating image into
words and of making those words seriously illuminating or the interpretation
offered through them ultimately compelling.[2]

For my purpose, such work is in any case preparatory, for my interest now
and in the rest of the thesis is with the content of the narrative and with
its form. The problems here are of a different order, though they are still
enormous.[3] They are not of course solved through the kind of formal and
structural analysis which I offer here, but if it is recognised that such
an analysis is itself the beginning, though in my view the correct beginning,
then it should be clear, at the end of it all, what the problems are and
perhaps even how they might best be approached.

So, if television tells stories, what are the stories that television tells? We can begin, as many others have done before, with the classic studies of Vladimir Propp.[4]

Vladimir Propp's study of Rissian folktale took as its point of departure the literary theories of Veselovsky[5] and his thematics, but it owed a much more direct debt to his formalist contemporaries, among whom the study of the texts, both poetic and narrative, as autonomous entities was the principal concern. Victor Shklovsky[6], Boris Eikhenbaum[7], and Roman Jakobson[8], among many others, defined for themselves a new field of poetics[9] and attacked the study of the devices and structures within the poetic and novelistic texts with gusto, an enthusiasm fanned and encouraged in the few years immediately following the Russian Revolution and before the cold hand of Marxist criticism stifled their anti-sociological independence[10].

Formalism was directed towards making the study of literature and literariness scientific[11]. Boris Eikhenbaum wrote in 1927: "What does characterise us is the endeavour to create an autonomous discipline of literary studies based on the specific properties of literary material."[12], a discipline which claims autonomy for its object and an object defined not by its content but by its form, by its devices: "...the specificity of art is expressed not in the elements that go to make up a work but in the special way they are used"[13] It involved, face-to-face with narrated texts, a distinction between plot (sjuzet) and story (fabula)[14] and it was the former which demanded

their attention. The contrast with the previously genetically oriented
literary history was clear enough.

> "The genetic approach can elucidate only origin and
> nothing more, while for poetics the elucidation of
> literary function is vital. Precisely what the
> genetic point of view fails to reckon with is the
> device as a special kind of utilisation of material;
> it fails to reckon with the selection of material
> from communal culture, its transformation, its
> constructional role; it fails finally, to reckon with
> the fact that a detail of communal culture may
> disappear, and yet its literary function remains;
> it remains not as a mere relic but as a literary
> device, retaining its own meaning, even if totally
> unrelated to communal culture."[15]

The claim for the autonomy of the text and for its identification through
the study of the devices that construct it involved necessarily a denial
of any type of reduction, to the social or to the psychological.[16] Neither
the author's personality nor the social circumstances of his time were in
any sense relevant to a science that claimed not books, but literature,
not poems, but poetry, not stories, but narrative, as its object of study.
At once, then, there was an explicit claim to generality. Formal units or
devices abstracted inductively and justified theoretically had a viability
beyond the specific texts in which they were originally located. Herein
lay the claim to science and to an objectivity of analysis; "the main test
was to establish the unity of any chosen structural device within the
greatest possible diversity of material"[17].

Vladimir Propp's analysis of the folk tales, Victor Erlich calls it "one of the most valid formalist contributions to the theory of fiction"[18] lies easily in this tradition. And it is in his work that narrative as, such, the structures that define how it is that a story can be told, gets its earliest systematic formulation. Propp was not, of course, blind to t implications of his study: "The scheme is a measuring unit for individual tales, just as cloth can be measured with a yardstick to determine its length, tales may be measured by the scheme and thereby defined. The application of a given scheme to various tales can also define the relation ships of tales among themselves. We already foresee that the problem of kinship of tales, the problem of themes and variants, thanks to this, may receive a new solution".[19]

The folk tale is, in Propp's view of it, doubly constrained; both by cultural reality outside it and by its internal structure. He concentrates his attention on the second and the result inductively reached, is a morphology: "...a description of the folk tale according to its component parts and the relationship of these components to each other and to the whole."[20] The primary units of the tale are its functions; "an act of a character, defined from the point of view of its significance for the course of the action,"[21] and they are few in number. The morphology is therefore the product of an ex post facto analysis and does not reflect or represent the act of creation or of reading with its concomitant uncertainty or risk; it is fundamentally a static analysis of an achieved and completed structure.[22]

From an examination of the folk tales which he takes from the Afanasev collection he produces a morphology which consists of 31 basic functions and nine preparatory ones.[23]

The preparatory functions are of uncertain status[24] and they are not involved in the rigorous chronology of the main functions; they exist primarily to set the scene and there are no rules determining their necessary presence or absence. The 31 main functions, however, give the tale its unity, though even here, on the basis of his empirical study, there are alternative arrangements which lead Propp to hazard a four-fold subclassification of the tales before him.[25] The actors, too, are subject to a simple classification and one which depends on their functional significance.[26]

The reader is referred to Appendix 2 and of course to the subsequent discussion. In brief, an account of Propp's conception of the narrative of the folk (or fairy tale) would be the following:

The scene is set by the absence or death of significant members of a family, by the arrival of a villainous character or by various acts of deception, stupidity or disobedience. The story proper begins with either a villainy or the experience of a loss (lack) - in other words through the assertion of disequilibrium, which it is the purpose of the following action to remedy. The hero or searcher would then leave home and become involved in a series of adventures which tests him and which lead, perhaps with magical help, to a successful resolution; either he finds what he is looking for or/triumphs over the villain[27]. The triumph is marked; the hero has some evidence of it and he returns home though pursued. His arrival may be something of a shock, for he will not be recognised as the hero and will subsequently have to test his status against the claims of a false hero. Once this has been achieved and he has gained his full recognition, the hero can be rewarded with marriage or gifts. In any event the equilibrium has been re/established, the lack redeemed, the villainy resolved.

This formulation is, even in Propp's view of it, doubly limited. It is limited to the genre, the fairy tale which albeit being a misnomer, identifies a specific group of tales linked both by content in Afanásev's classification and then subsequently by their form when Propp considers them.[28] It is equally limited by what Propp acknowledges is the pre-Linnean level of the admittedly crude, analysis which he offers,[29] but/nevertheless necessary it is as a preliminary, above all as a preliminary to true scientific work; "it must be said that decomposition into components is, in general, extremely important for any science. We have seen that up to now there has been no means of doing this completely objectively for the tale. This is a first, highly important, conclusion".[30]

Nevertheless despite this modesty, which is both substantive and methodological Propp has been criticised in a number of different ways. We need to be aware of these criticisms. They are of two kinds; the first centre on claims that Propp has misunderstood the nature of the folk tale and its narrative structure and the second that he has failed to see the implications or to fully develop the potential of his analysis.

Among the first, the most important, is that articulated perhaps centrally by Claude Bremond[31] that Propp's monochronology betrays the dynamic richness of the folk tale and that it denies its complexity. In so doing it imposes a premature and illegitimate closure on the tale. The folk tale, even at its most basic is not a simple linear structure and any method for its analysis should, Bremond believes, be able to recognise that such narratives can be complex both chronologically - for example, they can present two plots simultaneously - and in terms of character - we should be able to recognise both divergent perspectives and different motivations within a narrative[32]. The folk tale in Propp's hands becomes a static entity which overlooks the fact that a story is not predetermined but open

to a whole range of variations which are themselves the product of
the narrator's freedom, however limited. A narrative, for Bremond,
is a dynamic structure and analysis must preserve that dynamism in the
identification of its risk, its choice, its uncertainty. What needs to
be avoided most of all, and Propp fails to avoid it, is the reification
of the text.[33]

These objections are pertinent; they must be seen as the necessary
definition of some of the limits of what Propp has attempted, and indeed
they give substance to Propp's self-acknowledged crudity. But they are
themselves premised on assumptions which themselves are flawed and which
lead in Bremond's own work on narrative to an analysis of the logic not
of narrative as such but of action. What is missed by Bremond in his
dereification of the text is precisely its coherence. Narrative does
not consist in its potential, but in its completion. A story must end[34],
and it is not until its end that it becomes a story. The analysis of its
elements is therefore dependent on a previous recognition of a story's
integrity and on an understanding of its content, on the decisions that
have already been taken. To suggest otherwise is a sleight of hand.
Claude Bremond, while correctly identifying the limits of Propp's work,
nevertheless errs in denying narrative's own limits.

Underlying Claude Bremond's criticism, however, is the recognition which
he shares with most of Propp's critics that formalism inpoverishes its
object. A whole range of questions - about motivation, about the place
of the subject, about the different modes of narration and the place of
the narrator, about the concern with character and with content - are
avoided or relegated in Propp's analysis of the folk tale[35].

Indeed, Roland Barthes, in one of his more recent works, draws
attention to what he calls the plurality of the text, a plurality that
ultimately defies formal analysis. Barthes prefers to think of the
infinity of structure, in a manner, perhaps despite himself, very akin
to Claude Lévi-Strauss; "...for the plural text, there cannot be a
narrative structure, a grammar, or a logic: thus if one or other of
these are sometimes permitted to come forward; it is in proportion
(giving the expression its full qualitative value) as we are dealing
with incompletely plural texts, texts whose plural is more or less
parsimonious."[36] Even accepting this, it is of course the case that
implicit in Propp's argument is the assumption that folktales are just such
"incompletely plural texts" as indeed is my assumption that television
is also.

The second set of criticisms develops from this argument about
impoverishment but centres more on what Propp has not done rather than
on what he has, but poorly. There are a number of dimensions to this:
firstly that he excludes any notion of performance, of the dynamic in
the presentation and reception of a spoken or sung narrative;[37]
secondly that it fails to integrate the text with its context and in
particular with the culture that generates it and supports it; and
thirdly and as a corollary of this latter point, that Propp's formalism
is both too abstract, and insufficiently aware of the concrete logic
underlying narrative and in particular mythic narratives.[38] These
are points made substantially by Claude Lévi-Strauss, and worked through
in practice both by him and by A.J. Greimas. The remainder of this
chapter is involved in a consideration of the substantive work of
Lévi-Strauss and Greimas and therefore I would like at this stage only
to discuss the debate, inevitably rather one-sided, between Propp
and Lévi-Strauss.[39]

"Unless the content is surreptitiously reintegrated into
the form, the latter is condemned to remain at such a level
of abstraction that it neither signifies anything any longer
nor has any heuristic meaning. Formalism destroys its object.
With Propp it results in the discovery that there exists in reality
but one tale." 40

From form to structure. Claude Lévi-Strauss opposes Propp's

diffidence with a conception of narrative which systematically

moves beyond questions of morphology to take account of content,

context and meaning. However the barracking is deceptive; as

Lévi-Strauss recognizes[41] and as Propp foresees,[42] the divide between

them is neither clear nor unambiguous.

In Lévi-Strauss's own characterization of it, Propp's analysis does

not acknowledge that myth and folktales are metalinguistic entities

not linguistic ones. In his concentration on the syntax or chronology

of the tale he refuses to see that the elements from which it is

constructed themselves signify: "Let us say, to clarify this thesis,

that in a tale a "king" is not only a king and a "shepherdess" a

shepherdess, but that these words and what they signify become tangible

means of constructing an intelligible system formed by the oppositions:

male/female (with regard to nature) and high/low (with regard to culture)

as well as all possible permutations among the six terms."[43] Propp

cannot incorporate the content into his system. It remains outside.

It will be studied by the historian.

But for Lévi-Strauss, as I have suggested, it is precisely this

incorporation which makes the analysis of narrated texts both possible

and exciting. The texts themselves, and for Lévi-Strauss, these
                                                          and
texts are typically/ideally mythical, are metalanguages, in which not

only is the narrative chronology structured, but in which the entire

content and not just what Propp chooses to call its attributes,[44]

is patterned and constrained by its active inclusion in the text

and culture alike. Lévi-Strauss's view of the mythical texts and
the way of their analysis is a more inclusive, less humble affair,
and it is oriented to a desire to understand the texts and to do so by
relating them to their context, and to treat the content and its system
as a fundamental part of its structuring. Whereas Proppian formalism
remains in his view at the level of the abstract and of the syntactic,
and hence is ultimately sterile, Lévi-Strauss's own structuralism
demands consideration of the concrete context in which the tales are
constructed and told, a level of analysis which is essentially semantic
and which will be able to recreate the richness of the texts.[45]

> "The study of any linguistic system requires the cooperation
> of the grammarian and the philologist. This means that in
> the matter of oral tradition the morphology is sterile unless
> direct or indirect ethnographic observation comes to render
> it fertile."[46]

The analysis of the myth or folktale demands that all of it can be
structured, that nothing in it can be relegated to the arbitrary.
To suggest, however, that for Propp, the content is indeed arbitrary
is misleading. Propp, as Eleazor Meletinsky notes,[47] had a clear
sense of priorities. Consideration of content, the attributes of
the tale, must take a logical and chronological second place. His
consideration of this, at least in publication, gets no further than
a list,[48] but he is quite aware of their significance, and that,
potentially at least,the characters' attributes, initially listed under
three heads (external appearance and nomenclature, particularities of
introduction into the narrative, and dwelling place) can be analysed
and be analysed in a way remarkably close to that subsequently under-
taken by Lévi-Strauss.

Content therefore can be analysed and done so scientifically:
"To speak of the fact that the villain may be a dragon, a witch,
an old hag, robbers, merchants, or an evil princess etc., or that
the donor may be a witch, an old woman, a backyard-grandma, a
forest-spirit, or a bear etc., is not worthwhile, because this would
lead to the compiling of a catalogue. Such a catalogue is interesting
only if it is presented from the standpoint of more general problems.
These problems have been outlined; they are: the laws of trans-
formations and the abstract concepts which are reflected in the basic
forms of these attributes".[49]

If, as I have suggested, the whole discussion of form and structure
in the analysis of tales is overlain by the distinction between
language and metalanguage, /then underlying it, and in a certain sense
parallel with it, is the distinction, less easily drawn, between folk-
tale and myth.[50] That there is a distinction to be made is clear,
and I have discussed it already; that it can/not be made unambiguously
is equally clear. For Lévi-Strauss, as we have seen, folktales are
in every sense weaker than myths, though they are of a similar order;
tales and myths lie on a continuum, both dealing in similar ways with
similar material. The myths construct their oppositions through
cosmology, metaphysics and nature; the folktales are more often local,
social and moral. The structure itself differs. In the myths the
pressures of logical coherence, religious orthodoxy and/of the collectivity,
as it were, guarantees a coherence which the folktale avoids.[51] The
tale is structured in an altogether freer manner.

If this is the case then why, asks Lévi-Strauss, does Propp only concern
himself, and concern himself rather naively in his view, with folktales
and not myths? The simple answer, of course, and one that Lévi-Strauss

obstinately refuses to recognize as legitimate, is that Propp is

actually more interested in folktales. Instead he berates Propp

for his ethnological ignorance, his misconception of the true

relationship between folktale and myth, the former being a miniatur-

ization of the latter, and his failure to recognize that far from being

historically prior, myths and folktales actually coexist in many

societies.

> "The point is not to choose between tale and myth, but to
> understand that they are the two poles of a field that also
> includes all sorts of intermediate forms and that morphological
> analysis must be considered in the same way, if one does not
> want to leave out elements belonging, like the others, to one
> and the same system of transformations."[52]

Lévi-Strauss is berating Propp for not being Lévi-Strauss, and in so

doing seems to misconceive the distinct method and the distinct

material to which Propp addresses himself. It seems intuitively

correct to suggest that whereas the object of Propp's analysis, folktales,

are chronologically or syntactically strong and possibly logically or

semantically weak, the object of Lévi-Strauss's analysis, myths, are

chronologically less strong and semantically far from weak. In part

however this judgement is _too_ intuitive; the method masks the content.

But the intention is also different. Propp wishes to describe the

tale, Lévi-Strauss to describe the system of tales. As Eleazor Meletinsky

notes, Lévi-Strauss's analysis "... represents the analysis of the

structure of mythical thinking, and not of mythical narration,"[53] a

comment echoed by Alan Dundes.[54] Propp recognized the relation of

folktales and myth, as Lévi-Strauss notes, but regarded the description

of the tale as necessarily prior; he also recognized what generated

the coherence of the folktale more than anything else was its narrative

structure. As Meletinsky justly observes:

> "Lévi-Strauss's idea of the possibility of interpreting
> individual functions as the result of a transformation of
> the same material is very interesting and fruitful. However,

it is better to make such an examination after the summary
morphological analysis and not in place of it." -55

This seems reasonable. A Proppian formalist analysis need not,

indeed does not, contradict what a structuralist might offer.

The questions it asks, albeit limited, are different. In many cases

they may be more appropriate. In this case, that of the analysis of

television programmes, and in particular the analysis of drama programmes,

these questions do seem to be appropriate. We can by virtue of the

tools Propp provides, define the framework of the narrative and we can

define in what the structure of a particular tale might consist. There

is therefore a level of story-telling about which it is possible to be

quite precise, and that is its chronology, the syntagmatic arrangement

of its functional units. Such precision demands, as Propp and' Christian Met

acknowledge, little concern for the nature or structure of the wider

culture. Such precision therefore is necessarily exclusive of a

large part of the narration, its content, its meaning, which is told.

The listing of functional units in the description of a narrative's

morphology is necessarily a prolegomena to the work of understanding

what and how the narrative signifies.

II

Any attempt to face the problems of a text's semanticity involves

moving away from a close concern with its manifest structure, with

its visible patterns, and a correlative movement away from a desire

to preserve the text's integrity. Questions about a text's meaning

necessarily involve leaving the particular, albeit temporarily,

in order to establish the generality according to which that particular

becomes possible. Structure replaces classification, logic chronology,

and by and large, deduction replaces induction. The analysis of a

text, which might be a folktale or an individual myth, becomes the
analysis of meaning, of language or of myth as such.

At one extreme, Propp's morphology being at the other, of this broad
advance on narrative lies the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss, and it is
an extremity defined by its attempt to generate for myth, a logic of
sensible qualities, a logic of the concrete, a logic of culture.
The mythical texts with which he is concerned, manifest that logic but
in their entirety not in their individuality.   Lévi-Strauss is
concerned with a system and its constitution and he is concerned to
reveal its basic categories, and their interplay.   The chronology of
the narrative is reduced to an enigmatic formula, but one which has a
logical coherence of thesis, antithesis, synthesis rather than a
defined and precise sequence of elements.[56]

Somewhere between, and the vagueness is deliberate, for the metaphor is
not precise, lies the structural semantics of A. Julian Greimas,[57]
which, as this would imply, is concerned not with narratives as such
and certainly not with folktales, nor indeed with myth or with culture,
but with a theory of the construction of meaning which in its
syntagmatics owes something to the morphology of Propp, and in its
paradigmatics to the structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss.   Its
model of language owes much to Ferdinand de Saussure and to Louis Hjelmslev.[5]

For Greimas narrative is where the semantic action is, and the structures
of narrative lie at the heart of a general theory of meaning.
It is in the movement through a text that its various elements, their
interrelationship and above all their transformations become manifest.
It is in the exploration of the structure of narrative, and in the
definition of its grammar, that the semantics as well as the syntactics
of language are explored.   His analyses are uneven and often eccentric.

Indeed Jonathan Culler has argued that his claim for an adequate

semantic theory, or even for a clearly defined move in that direction,

is generally open to dispute.[59]   I am not here concerned with these

claims, but to demonstrate in the acknowledgement of their limitation,

in what ways Greimas' understanding and analysis of narrative aids

our understanding of the way in which the television drama is patterned.[60]

Greimas moves away from the Proppian classificatory schema, but he

does not leave the text/in the way that Lévi-Strauss might do.
                     quite

At the same time his work takes the form of an analytical theory and

in its advocacy of structures and in its exploration of canonic

formulae the theory has a similar shape to that of Lévi-Strauss and

in many ways is compatible with it.[61]   For my purpose then, the work

of Greimas allows us to deepen an understanding of the nature of

narrative and at the same time to direct attention to the ways in which

we might formally approach it.

Central to Greimas' understanding of narrative is what he terms its

anthropomorphic nature.   By this he means that at a certain level,

the level of superficial grammar, the narrative presents a logic

which translates the abstract categories of contrariety, correlation

contradiction and transformation in terms of subject, object and act.[62]

The act (faire) is to narrative what the verb is to the grammar

of natural language, but also what the operation is within a logical

system.   There is an assumption, made by others also,[63] that the

construction of the sentence, and the construction of the narrative

are structurally homologous.   The act and the verb and the operation

all act as pivots in the creation and in the transformation of

meaning.[64]

For Greimas indeed, the structures of narrative lie at the heart

of a general theory of meaning:

> "...on voit que l'élaboration d'une théorie de la narrativité
> qui justifierait et fonderait en droit d'analyse narrative
> comme un domaine de recherches methodologiquement autosuffisant,   ;
> ne consiste pas seulement dans le perfectionnement et
> formalisation des modèles narratifs obtenus par des descriptions
> de plus en plus nombreuses et variées, ni dans une typologie
> de ces modèles qui les subsumerait tous, mais aussi, et surtout,
> dans l'installation des structures narratives, en tant
> qu'instance autonome a l'interieur de l'économie génerale,
> de la sémotique, conçue comme science de la signification."65

The path from verb to act is extended in the detailed analysis of

the structure of narrative to the functional significance of the test

(l'épreuve).   It is here, of course, that the Proppian model intrudes.

For, like the verb and the generalized act, the test acts in the narrative

as an agent of change;   from the potential to the actual, from hope to

success or failure, from lack to its remedy.[66]

> "Si l'épreuve, comme nous avons essayé de la montrer par ailleurs,
> n'est que la manifestation superficielle, située sur le plan
> anthropormophique, de la transformation de contenues profonds
> du récit, le narrateur, pour conduire les acteurs déjà
> institues vers l'épreuve, doit prevoir de quelle manière
> leur affrontement aura s'effectuer par produire la trans-
> formation finale souhaitée."67

It is here, in the test, that the particular balance of liberty and

constraint which marks the progress of the narrative is defined,[68]

and it is here, in the test, that the particular temporality (chronologic)

of the narrative manifests itself, overlaying and directing the

categorial logic (which may be abstract or concrete).[69]

In order to understand this more fully we have to recognize that for

Greimas, the anthropomorphic grammatical structure of the narrative

expresses and, in a sense, operationalizes a more fundamental grammar

and is itself manifested in a figurative discourse;   it is given a

content in which the act becomes an action.   The reading of a narrative

then becomes an operation which demands a simultaneous recognition

of three levels of ordering; the fundamental, the anthropomorphic

(<u>superficiel</u>) and the manifest. The first, the fundamental, is an

abstract logic, content free from the point of view of the text;

the second, the anthropomorphic in a sense gives this abstract logic

life by replacing categories by actors and operations by acts, but

whose meaning is still logical and categorial as opposed to chronological,

and it is still abstracted from the text; the third, the manifest, is

the equivalent to Propp's morphology: a level of meaning which is

textually specific, though rule governed. The last two, the

superficial and the manifest are equivalent to the semic and the

lexemic in Greimas' analysis of the elementary structure of meaning,

and the first, /fundamental, is, in this sense, pre-semic. I shall

return to this dimension of the analysis again.[70]

I want now to consider how Greimas understands the nature of narrative

and to show how this understanding is derived from his analysis of

the work of Vladimir Propp, and also in a certain sense, overlaps

with that of Claude Lévi-Strauss.

> "Le déclenchement de la narration y serait représente
> comme l'établissement d'une relation contractuelle
> <u>conjonctive</u> entre un destinateur et un destinateure-suject,
> suivie d'un disjonction spatial entre les deux actants.
> L'achèvement du récit serait marqué, au contraire, par un
> conjonction spatiale et un dernier transfert des valeurs,
> instituant un nouveau contract par une nouvelle distribution
> de valeurs, aussi bien objectives que modales."[71]

This summary definition illustrates the transformation which Greimas

works on the Proppian schema, a transformation from an inventory to

a model. It is an attempt, above all, to define the system underlying

the presentation of a narrative and in so doing to identify the

capacity of the narrative to generate meaning.

There are a number of dimensions to this transformation.[72]

Firstly there is the incorporation into the theory of narrative
                of
per se/a semantic theory which depends both on a simple distinction

of level, that between the seme and the lexeme,[73] and a distinction   :

within the seme between the nucleus and the classeme.   In each

basic unit of meaning (the seme) Greimas distinguishes a core

element, the nucleus, and a variable one, the classeme.   In
                                with
narrative this correlates /the distinction between an act and its

qualification, or contextualization.   The nucleii are those functional

acts, equivalent to those identified by Propp; the confrontations ,

deceptions, transformations, present in, and necessary to, any narrative;

the classemes are those elements which place them and make them relate

to each other;   some will be geographical, some alimentary, some

physical and so on.[74]

However, Greimas finds Propp's thirtyone functions unwieldy.[75]

He suggests that Propp has failed to gather the full harvest

of his insights and in particular that he has not recognized the

interdependence and balance between the various functions which he

identifies.   Greimas' reformulation of them involves, it would seem,

some sleight of hand, but the principle of them is clear enough.

In the first instance, it involves a pairing of the initial eight

categories of Propp   .   This leads to a formulation in which

essentially interdiction (γ) is paired with violation (δ), reconnaissance

(ϵ) with information received (ζ), deceit (η) with submission to

deceit (θ), and villainy (A) with lack (a).[76]   More significantly

each of these pairs identifies a particular dimension of the narrative,

the threads of which in this situation are broken but which are retied

as the narrative progresses.   So the interdiction and violation announces

the breaking of a contract;   reconnaissance and information received

suggests the denial of information or knowledge (savoir) to the

hero to the advantage of the villain, and deceit and submission

to deceit lead to an equivalent denial of power or ability to act

(pouvoir).   Villainy and lack, preserve the active/passive

dichotomy and dc /in terms of a denial of an object which becomes

therefore an object of desire, and is situated thus in the realm

of wishing (vouloir).[77]

Each of these dichotomies, in a redundant fashion, define the

rupture with which the narrative opens, and underly the further rearrangemer

of Propp's categories (a rearrangement which Greimas acknowledges to

be hardly more manageable than the original set) [78].   It is both the

fact of rupture and the dimensions of rupture that are most crucial.

Greimas wishes to establish the essential balance in the narrative;

a balance suggested in the notion of contract - broken, then mended -

and in a conception of the narrative as a system of exchange.[79]

What Greimas aims to show, then, in general terms ,is how the narrative

proceeds to remedy the various dimensions of rupture which have been

initially stated.   Propp's functions B and C therefore involve the

hero in accepting the task;   a new contract is potentially established.

Greimas argues that the narrative, usually in the order suggested by

Propp, an order which in Greimas' hands is essentially logical rather

than chronological, demands that the hero first of all gains the

necessary power, and for this he seeks and finds helpers or magical

agents;   he then confronts the villain and gains (or does not gain)

the object of his desire, and finally that he must prove himself the

true hero and thereby establish his authenticity.   So power, desire

and knowledge recover their integrity.   Finally each narrative restates

the new contract and Propp's function W, the wedding, symbolizes
that.[80]

However Greimas' algebraic notation for the structure of the narrative
exceeds and transcends Propp's model, and an attempt to make his
categories comparable to those of Propp proves somewhat tortuous.[81]
In addition it ignores the importance that Propp attaches to the
alternative models of the narrative structure. It suggests that
the narrative of the folktale can be structured with certain of these
crucial elements missing and still remain an 'authentic' tale. In
Propp's formulation tales can manifest either the combat with the
villain (HI), or the assignment of a difficult task (MN), but not,
normally, both.[82] Incidentally Propp's function L, the claims
of the false hero finds no place in the Greimas' scheme, though it is
implicit in the need for the hero to prove himself authentic.

Underlying these complaints, which are themselves fairly trivial, is
an anxiety about the exact status of the model Greimas offers. By
that I mean whether it is to apply to folktales or to narratives as
a whole, and if to the latter - a more likely proposition - whether
it is to be a minimal or a maximal definition. If narratives are
to be defined in terms of their balance and coherence, then what
would be the effect of the absence of any of the elements apparently
needed to preserve that balance? Indeed, as some commentators have
pointed out,[83] there are many narratives, or apparent narratives,
which do not manifest a structure as either Propp or Greimas suggests.
Are they to be excluded? The advantage of the Proppian formulation
in this regard is its inductive generalization: it acts as a summary
before it becomes a prescription. The disadvantage of Greimas'
formulation lies precisely in its prescription. The reason for
introducing these comments now is that they relate substantially to

the claims, explicitly and implicitly made by Greimas, and by other
students of narrative that what they are studying is universal.[84.]
                the
The key to/universality of narrative lies, for Greimas, in the

fundamental formula which he suggests underlies it and indeed the

entire universe of the symbolic.   That this remains to be established

goes without saying.   This discussion of the work of Greimas then

leaves open the question of the range of its applicability.   It seems

reasonable to suggest that empirical evidence will define precisely

its limits.

So far what has been presented is a model of the narrative's equilibrium

of contract ruptured and remedied, and of the points along the way

which define the various aspects of the contract.   The narrative

balances in the communication of information (objet-message),

strength (objet- vigeur) and goods (objet-bien).[85]
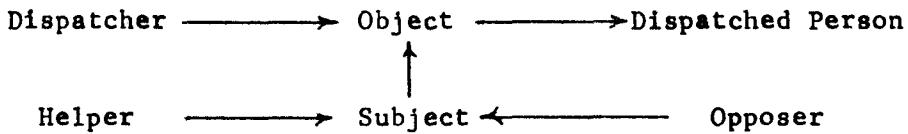
The dynamic in the narrative is provided by the test.   Greimas identifies

three tests within the Proppian classification, and noting where Propp

has failed to recognize their symmetry and also failed to identify them

fully, represents them in terms of a qualifying (pouvoir), principal

(vouloir) and glorifying (savoir) test.[86]   In his more detailed analysis

of the morphology of the test Greimas succeeds in showing that within

it the first and the second two elements are themselves balanced: the

hero is challenged, he accepts the challenge and is followed by combat

and success (or failure).   The one unpaired element in the entire

narrative structure is the result of the test, its consequence, the

achievement or non-achievement of the object.

The balance in the narrative is therefore preserved even in the test,

until the last moment;   it is in the achievement or failure, its

postponement or its neutralisation that the freedom of the narrative

consists and it is through this that narrative tips over, as it were,
and, moves on and forward towards/re-establishment of its
equilibrium.

Two further dimensions of the structure of the narrative at the
anthropomorphic level need to be considered; the first concerns
the basic acting units, the second their movement from place to
place. The first follows from Propp's alternative and parallel
definition of the narrative of the folktale in terms of its roles.
Propp lists seven, each of which dominates a sphere of action.
They are the villain, the hero, the donor, the helper, the princess,
the despatcher and the false hero.[87]

In Greimas' formulation, and in part following Etienne Souriou,[88] these
seven become six and are presented in the form of a model; the actorial
model;

Dispatcher ⟶ Object ⟶ Dispatched Person

Helper ⟶ Subject ← Opposer

"... ce modèle semble posséder, en raison de sa simplicité,
et pour l'analyse des manifestations mythiques seulement,
une certaine valeur operationelle."[89]

This is a reductive formula. Greimas intends that the characters
in a narrative be understood in terms of a simple and exclusive
structure. These acting units (actants) are therefore neither
roles nor characters, but abstractions, logical from the point of
view of the narrative's system, but necessary to it. Each actorial
category can be filled by one character in a tale, or by many (there
can be many helpers) and, conversely, one character can fulfil more
than one of these acting units (a character can be both dispatcher
and opposer).

Jonathan Culler has questioned the coherence of this model in terms

of the different quality of involvement as between the dispatcher

- dispatched ,and the other four categories.[90]   A further comment

might be added.   It is precisely in the variety of the articulations   ⁝

of these units (figures) that a story or a genre will gain some unity

and identity.   The actorial structure is important because in it the

two dimensions of a narrated text meet;   on the one hand its chronology,

the narrative proper, in Greimas' terms, on the other the discourse,

the content or thematic structure.   The actor in his action both

advances the narrative, but does so in a particular way and with

particular significance.
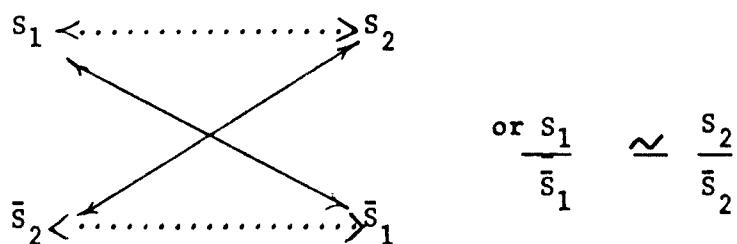
> "La structure actorielle apparaît dès lors comme une structure
> topologique;   tant en relevant à le fois des structures
> narratives et des structures . discursives, elle n'est que le lieu
> de leur manifestation, n'appartenant en propre ni à l'une ni
> a l'autre."[91]

The final dimension of the narrative conceived in its anthropomorphism

is provided by the movement of the hero from place to place.   Greimas

discusses this in the context of the chronological development of the

narrative.   Where the action takes place, at home or away, within

society or beyond it, is important for his interpretation of the

narrative, and in particular of that of the Russian folktale presented

by Vladimir Propp.   For here Greimas suggests /the tales present a
                                            that

conflict between the individual and society, a conflict of freedom and

constraint.   The hero is free to act as long as he remains outside,

away from society.[92]   But it is clear also that the movements of the

hero (Propp's functions ↑ , G,Pr/Ps, and ↓) are of a second order of

significance within the structure of the narrative.   Movement from

place to place in a narrative is of a different order of significance

than the contract, the lack and the test.   Such movements are much

more the property of the discourse or logic, than of the chronologic

- they are contextual rather than actorial.   I will give some

illustration of this in chapter 6.

is
The final level of analysis/offered by Greimas in terms of what he

calls the constitutional (canonic) model.   Here is the base

structure, the semiotic foundation to the narrative, indeed, as

he believes, the foundation of all meaning.   It has much in common

with Lévi-Strauss's concern with the binary.   In both cases what

is presented is a logical structure.   Above this primary semiotic

level which defines "the fundamental mode of existence of an

individual or a society, and subsequently, the conditions of existence

as I have already suggested
of semiotic objects,"[93] we find/two further levels, the first an

anthropomorphic grammar, independent of the text, and the second

the structures of manifestation embodied in its content and context.

The constitutional model is constructed on the opposition, at an

abstract level, of contrariety and contradiction and it is presented,

diagrammatically, in this way:

$$S_1 \longleftrightarrow S_2 \qquad \text{or } \frac{S_1}{\bar{S}_1} \approx \frac{S_2}{\bar{S}_2}$$
$$\bar{S}_2 \longleftrightarrow \bar{S}_1$$

S_1 and S_2 are contraries of each other; S_1 and $\bar{S}_1$ and S_2 and $\bar{S}_2$ are

contradictories.   For example, to give S_1 the meaning 'life', and

S_2 the meaning 'death', its contrary, $\bar{S}_1$ and $\bar{S}_2$ indicate the absence

of life (non-life) and the absence of death (non-death) respectively.[94]

It is suggested, though Bremond notes, not without ambiguity,[95]

that $\bar{S}_1$ and S_2 and $\bar{S}_2$ and S_1 are related by implication;   for

example the situation of non-death implies life.   It need not, of

of course, and in a footnote to the French original which is not
reproduced in the translation, Greimas defines this as an unsolved
problem of orientation.[96]

The point, however, is the suggestion of the ubiquity and relevance
of such a model, particularly in terms of its ability to define the
essence of a text or a discourse. We have seen it underlying the
relations of contract and test in Greimas' description of the
superficial level of the narrative (its chronology). Here it is
articulated in terms of the balancing of offer and acceptance, of
lack and remedy in which positive and negative valencies are
continually opposed.[97] It is also present in the opposition of the
actorial model, above all in terms of subject and object, helper and
opposer, and indeed in an analysis presented in a later study of
narrative, location, action and antagonism are intermingled in an
attempt to show how the narrative moves through this logical structure
of contrariety and contradiction,in its totality.[98]

Indeed this is the very structure that Lévi-Strauss himself identifies
to be at the heart of mythic narration.[99] Greimas and Francois Rastier
are not unaware of precisely this.

> "This new presentation allows one to see that what is first
> of all the structure permitting an account of the model of
> existence of the meaning,finds its application, as a
> constitutional model of the inverted contents, in very
> varied spheres: indeed, it is the model of myth propounded
> by Lévi-Strauss, it is the form of the achronic articulation
> of the folktale, but it is also the model justifying a
> certain number of particular semantic universes (Bernanos,
> Mallarmé, Destutt de Tracy). It is comforting for the
> semiotician to note that a deductive approach encounters
> models constructed empirically to account for the limited
> corpora."[100]

It may be comforting but it is by no means certain how we are to
understand the precise significance of such a level of narrative.

There is a problem, as for example Claude Bremond notes,[101] of

reducing the essential chronology of narrative to a static

abstraction, and this is essentially a problem of seeing the

narrative in terms of its dependence on, its operationalisation of,

a series of logical categories which are not specific to it.   There

is no certain reason why this should be outlawed, as Bremond would
      but
wish,/on the other hand, and equally, there is no certainty that

all narratives are so reducible.However as I have already said

Bremond's model of the narrative denies in an almost a priori fashion

the suggestion of a reduction of what is fundamentally a chronological

structure to the play of semiotic forces.   For Bremond movement is

more important than stasis, time more central than space.

In opposition to Bremond's insistence on movement and chronology

with its tendency to deny the integrity of the narrative, Greimas

offers a more rigid approach to the semiotic and semantic[102] preconditions

for its reading.   He identifies the various levels, of imminence and

manifestation, of grammar and discourse, and attempts to suggest their

interrelationship.   The model assumes the compatibility of sentence

and story.   In his early work, the chronology of the text is preserved,

albeit at the price, perhaps, of the lack of generality which these

analyses have, by virtue of their proximity to the Proppian schema.

Subsequent developments have created the condition for approaching

the generality of narrative though still not the universality which

is claimed, but this seems to be at the expense of the text, of the

narration itself.   More importantly there is a consistent attempt to

produce an intrinsic semantics, a logic for the generation of meaning,

and this involves a corresponding reluctance, not to say refusal, to

consider to what extent the deciphering of a narrated text depends on

a previous knowledge of other texts and of the culture as a whole.

The content of a tale is structured, but that structuring need

not be the exclusive product of the telling; it may precede it.

And even though the constitutional model claims adequacy for any

and every process of signification, it is precisely how and in what

ways it becomes incorporated into a text which is interesting and still

problematical. This is, I assume, an empirical question. To

answer it one must be aware of the particular nature of the presenting

and presented culture as a whole. It is the culture which acts, as

it were, as the filter through which the basic categories of the

constitutional model gain their content. To understand the resonance

of a narrated text, then, involves not just a consideration of its

intrinsic chronology, nor even of the static equilibrium which may

sustain it, but also a consideration of the redolent categories of

its historical context. While A.J. Greimas' formulations by no means

exclude that possibility, indeed in part they depend on it, his primary

concern with narration leaves open the questions of the integration

of the narrated text into the wider culture.

III

It is more towards these questions that the analyses of myth of

Claude Lévi-Strauss are oriented. The qualification here is

important, for much of what Greimas attempts is dependent on

Lévi-Strauss's insights and he assumes that what he is doing will

not prove significantly incompatible with the work of the anthrop-
ologist. [103] That their orientation to narrative and to myth is

different is not at issue, but the line between them should not be

hastily or crudely drawn.

There are, then, two dimensions in Claude Lévi-Strauss's work on
myth, the first much closer to the concerns of Greimas than the
second. The first, essentially articulated in his early work on
the structure of myth, preserves a concern with defining a mythic
narrative in terms of the abstract formulations of a balanced logic
so beloved of Greimas.[104] But this is quickly relegated to a minor
significance not just in the face of more complicated material, but
implicitly, through an awareness that such an imposition may be both
arbitrary and misleading. Rather than stamp a four term structure
on one myth, or a series of myths, and thereby excluding much that
might otherwise be relevantly included, Lévi-Strauss, for example,
in the Gèste d'Asdiwal [105] and in his Mythologiques[106] prefers an
approach which seeks the codes at work within a particular corpus.
An abstract logic is replaced by a concrete one. The tightness
of a balanced structure gives way to an endless array of patterns
and codes. Narrative is replaced by myth.

More basically, the myth is replaced by the mythic system, and as
a number of folklorists and indeed defenders of the Proppian approach
have ruefully noticed, Lévi-Strauss is not really concerned with
the texts of specific myths but with the system within which these are
to be found.[107] The texts which he takes as the objects for analysis
are only the means to an end - the identification of the basic thought
processes of the primitive, as they are manifested in the mythic narratives.

Let us be clear about what is involved in this change of perspective.
We are firstly faced, quite obviously, with a change of scale.
Lévi-Strauss is an extrovert. The careful precision of formalism
is replaced by an extravagant, thought not necessarily any less

precise, fusion of form and content.[108]   Whereas formalism

destroys its object, his structuralism not only preserves it, but

situates it; the tales are elements only of a cultural and

intellectual system whose meaning is multifaceted.   The search

for those meanings depends both on a sensitivity to the subtleties

of their assumed logic and on a methodology sufficiently powerful

to extract that logic from incomplete texts, even in the knowledge

that the analyses will be endless.   To follow the path traced by

what Clifford Geertz calls Lévi-Strauss's 'infernal culture machine'[109]

is to follow not just the trajectory of a primitive culture in its

attempts to make sense of the continuity and chaos of the natural

world, but also to an undefinable degree to follow the rigorous

mental meanderings of an inspired anthropologist.[110]

Claude Lévi-Strauss is not concerned with narrative as such, not

if we mean by narrative the chronology of a specific tale.

However, he is concerned with narration, and the codes at work within

diverse texts, and which define their possibility.

> "....what I am concerned to clarify is not so much what
> there is in myths (without incidentally being in man's
> consciousness) as the system of axioms and postulates
> defining the best possible code, capable of conferring
> a common significance on unconscious formulations which
> are the work of minds, societies and civilizations chosen
> from among the most remote from each other."[111]

Myths are told; in that sense they are narratives, and in that sense

Lévi-Strauss shares a common object with Greimas and Propp, but myth

lies outside a specific telling, and in that sense his object is

different.[112]   But like Greimas, Lévi-Strauss is seeking universals;

an anthropology of the tale, and though he is scathing as to the

viability of contemporary myth, to make sense of his task we would

need to enquire into stories not manifestly, in his terms, mythic.

Lévi-Strauss's earliest attempts to come to terms with the problem of mythic communication confine themselves to a very small corpus of texts and to a consideration of the outlines of an appropriate method.[113]   His model is the linguistics of Roman Jakobson and Ferdinand de Saussure, of language as a diacritical system whose basic operation is binary.[114]   But myth, as we have seen, is not language but metalanguage.   It uses already constituted signs to create new meanings.[115]

The analysis of myth, initially proceeding in a trial and error fashion, presupposes an ability to recognize basic units - mythemes - which can be arranged in a pattern reflecting the diachronic and synchronic aspects of mythic communication.[116]   In order to preserve the latter, the synchronic, the need is to identify not isolated mythemes but bundles of them so that beneath the manifest chronology of a single and isolated myth a level of coherent expression can be established, which depends for its understanding on the 'spatialization' of its elements and on their temporal reversability.   The model is that of an orchestra score where the text is read, as it is played, according to both horizontal and vertical dimensions.   Myths have a harmony as well as a melody.   Lévi-Strauss can distinguish its sequences from its schemata:

> "The sequences form the apparent content of the myth;   the chronological order in which things happen.... But these sequences are organized on planes at different levels (of abstraction), in accordance with schemata, which exist simultaneously, superimposed one upon another;   just as a melody composed for several voices is held within bounds by constraints in two dimensions, first by its own melodic line which is horizontal, and second by the contrapuntal schemata (settings) which are vertical."[117]

His first demonstration of the technique, now well known, is his
analysis of the Oedipus myth,[118] in which the elementary chronology
of the narrative, as told, is tabulated in an attempt to reveal the
structure of the myth and how it is to be understood. Four columns
are summarizable in terms of the overrating of blood relations,
(most seriously in Oedipus' incest), the underrating of blood relations
(actual and attempted intrafamilial killings), the slaying of monsters
and finally the difficulties of walking straight and standing upright.
The juxtaposition of the first two of these columns as against the
second two, suggests to Lévi-Strauss that the myth articulates one
solution to the problem of the origin of man.   The Greeks believed
in the autochthonous origin of man, but at the same time were quite
aware that human beings were actually born in a rather different
fashion.   By opposing denial of blood relations to their incestuous
affirmation (difference versus identity) and the denial of the
monstrous origin of mankind to the physical manifestations of its
inevitability (lameness) the myth is turning over, as it were, this
insoluble problem.

If one were to add, as one should, all the variants of the myth, one
would then be able to produce in their juxtaposition, not just the
structure of one story but of the system as a whole.   And Lévi-Strauss
continues his analysis by examining in the first instance various
accounts of the Zuni origin and emergence myths,[119] where oppositions
of life and death, permanence and change, are mediated by the
categories of agriculture and hunting and by animals and birds
associated with them.   The mythic system, whose logic is presented
variously by the different examples, is identified in terms of opposition
and resolution, the latter the product of the activity of mediators,
those beings, or categories, which, as it were, are neither one thing
nor the other.[120]

The result, at least of this early formulation, is the law of the

permutation group - a law which is relevant to myth as such, and

which is roughly comparable to the constitutional model of A.J.Greimas:

$$Fx(a): Fy(b) \approx Fx(b): Fa-1(y)$$

in which x and y are the functions of terms a and b, and wherein

the opposition of the first part is 'resolved' by a process of

substitution and inversion in the second; b, present in both halves

of the equation acts as a mediator whereby first a is replaced by its

opposite (a-1) and secondly whereby an inversion is made between the

function value and the term value of two elements (y and a).[121]

Eili-Koija Kongas and Pierre Maranda illustrate this otherwise

enigmatic formulation as follows:

> "....if a given actor (a) is specified by a negative
> function,(fx)(and thus becomes a villain), and another
> one (b) by a positive function(fy)(and thus becomes a
> hero),(b) is capable of assuming in turn also the
> negative function (by in the juxtaposition of two
> negatives, generating a positive result - my interpretation)
> which process leads to a 'victory' so much more complete
> that it proceeds from the 'ruin' of the term (a) and
> thus definitely establishes the positive value (y) of the
> final outcome.   This time as a term (y) is specified by
> a function which equals the inverse of the first term."[122]

In this anthropomorphisation of the formula its basic point is, I

hope, made clear.   In the inversion and opposition of functional

value and the value of its terms, the narrative resolves an initial

contradiction: it ties a knot.   This formula reappears in the

Mythologiques in terms of the mythic system as a whole.[123.]

Underlying these relatively obscure and often difficult formulations,

and underlying equally Levi-Strauss's canonic formula for the narrative

lie a number of basic analytic principles.   We can identify three:

firstly the establishment of the binary at the heart of mythical

thought;[124] secondly the identification of the different dimensions

of mythic communication, namely code, message and armature; and thirdly

the recognition of the different levels of coding potentially present in the mythic and the recognition that their analysis is (in a certain sense) endless.

Lévi-Strauss's advocacy of a binary structure at the heart of myth has two aspects.[125] He assumes that the distinction between an item and its opposite, a and not a, must be the simplest relationship in any activity of classification; and he extrapolates from above all Roman Jakobson's work in phonology :: where the binary principle seems to be at work significantly at a pre-semantic level.[126] The naturalness of the binary is then both the naturalness of the activity of the mind, but also a naturalness to be perceived in the objective world. Not only does the mind think in terms of oppositions and difference, but the mind perceives that opposition and difference in otherwise unmediated nature. Species, for example, themselves are distinct.

The analyses consequently take the form of a series of concrete oppositions which Lévi-Strauss divines as being at work within a mythic text. So an opposition of eagle and wolverine is an opposition of high and low, sky and earth, along the axes of hunter; the opposition of eagle and vulture is one of carrion and flesh eating bird, of rotten and raw. Using these and similar categories the mythic structure opens out like petals of a flower. But it is a destructuring-structuring activity in ignorance of the chronology of the text, and dependent entirely on the reversible logic of similarity and difference though which Lévi-Strauss assumes the primitive constructs his world. It also involves, oppositions which are content specific and tend to avoid the purity suggested by the a, not a category. Lévi-Strauss's binariness tends to elide contradiction and contrariety.

This apparent reduction of the activity of mind and the complexity

of its texts to such a simple operation has been much criticized,

and, to a degree, misunderstood. [127] That our thought is exclusively

binary would be an absurd a proposition as a suggestion that it never

is. Lévi-Strauss himself is aware of its limits.

> "... the binary model we sketched is not enough. It
> permits the abstract definition of values which present
> a limiting character, but not the translation of concrete
> properties and the measure of degrees of proximity. To
> be able to do this, one would have to elaborate an analogical
> model where the initial and final positions of each myth
> would fit into a multi-dimensional space, each of these
> dimensions providing a parameter along which would be
> arranged, in the most convenient manner, the variations
> of the same semantic function." [128]

Here the binary becomes an heuristic device: elsewhere it has

ontological significance. This is an ambiguity which is the bain

of any mature consideration of Lévi-Strauss's work.

The second dimension of Lévi-Strauss's analysis of myth involves

a consideration of three aspects of the system; armature, codes

and message, to whose interaction I have already referred in discussing

the identification of the system as such. By armature Lévi-Strauss

means the invariant properties of two or several myths; for example

two myths (say M_1 and M_{12} in The Raw and the Cooked) are both

involved in the articulation of the relationship of fire and water. [129]

The code relates to 'the patterned functions ascribed in each myth

to these properties'; it defines the dimensions in which the opposition

of water and fire are articulated. Typical levels of coding

considered in his analysis of myth both in the Mythologiques and

elsewhere, are those of the culinary, astronomical, sociological,

accoustic and so on. I will return to the implications of these

levels shortly. Finally the message: this relates to the subject

matter of each individual myth; what the myth is manifestly about.

"I can define the relation between the Bororo myth (M_1)
and the Sherente myth (M_{12}) by stating that when we
move from one to the other, the armature remains constant,
to code is changed, and the message is reversed."[130]

The point, in general, is that the mythic system is the product of the
interweaving of these different threads of discourse, and rather like
a plait made of three strands, consistency and difference, structure
and position, are what constitutes its integrity. To recognize
that in the juxtaposition of two myths one dimension (the armature)
remains constant, that the codes have changed, but the message is
entirely different, suggests, at least to Levi-Strauss, that he
look for another myth where these relationships are inverted. Here
the myth will present a further and contrasting message but along a
similar armature and perhaps with different codes. Needless to say
Levi-Strauss, in The Raw and the Cooked, finds just such a myth,[131]
the Sherente (M_{124}) myth which returns the analysis to the starting
point and to the Bororo via a transformation of code and message.
The subsequent analysis in then undertaken in terms of the various
codes through which the origin of fire and water are articulated in
each of the myths, and also in other myths which are selected to
illustrate and to enhance particular points of interpretation and
logical interconnection.

The most illuminating illustration of this plaited movement is to
be found in his analysis of the six variations of the Guiana, Tupi-
Tucuna and Ge myths[132] about the origin and loss of honey. Here,
within a methodological framework which defines the set in terms of
a change in either the nature of the dominant species of animal or
in its sex, but not both at once, and by constantly referring to the
ethnography and ethnozoology of the tribes whose myths they are,
he traces the ways in which the dominant message and its codes defines

the spherical and the musical structure of the mythical system
as a whole.

There is, however, a certain unresolved tension here and it brings
us to the third of the methodological dimensions of Lévi-Strauss's
analysis: that of the potentially endless and multivaried levels
of coding present in myth.

On a number of occasions Levi-Strauss draws attention to the obvious
difficulties associated with his task.   This is most significantly
expressed in the Overture to the Raw and the Cooked:

> "There is no real end to mythological analysis, no
> hidden unity to be grasped once the breaking-down
> process has been completed.   Themes can be split
> up ad infinitum.   Just when you think you have
> disentangled and separated them, you realize that
> they are knitting together again in response to the
> operation of unexpected affinities.   Consequently
> the unity of the myth is never more than tendential
> and projective and cannot reflect a state or a
> particular moment of the myth.   It is a phenomenon
> of the imagination, resulting from the attempt at
> interpetation; and its function is to endow the
> myth with a synthetic form and to prevent its disinteg-
> ration into a confusion of opposites."[133]

The confidence, then, with which subsequently the system of myth
and its structural interconnections, is defined, is dependent on a
selection of privileged dimensions.   For example it is the opposition
between earth and water which seems to Lévi-Strauss to be the central
one in the stories about Asdiwal,[134] an opposition most clearly linked
to the economic activity of the Tlingit and Tsimshian Indians   whose
myths they are.   In the first volume of the Mythologiques the
culinary opposition of the raw and the cooked establishes the main
path along which the analysis runs.[135]   The system, therefore,
is quite clearly a construction.   As such, though the analysis might,
and in Lévi-Strauss's case certainly does, generate coherence and
sense, it is never entirely free from the arbitrariness with which it
(as all aspects of culture) began.

Let me create some of the redundancy so beloved by myth and so

disapproved of in accounts of this sort by summarizing and

developing some of the points made so far.

On a number of occasions in his work Lévi-Strauss deliberately

addresses himself to questions of methodology.   On the one hand,

as for example in his 'Comparative Religions of Nonliterate Peoples',

his propositions specify the very basic operations involved in the

type of analysis which he advocates.

> "1.   A myth must never be interpreted on one level only.
> No privileged explanation exists, for any myth
> consists in an interrelation of several explanatory
> levels.
>
> 2.   A myth must never be interpreted individually, but
> in its relationship to other myths which, taken
> together, constitute a transformation group.
>
> 3.   A group of myths must never be interpreted alone,
> but by reference: (a) to other groups of myths;
> and (b) to the ethnography of the societies in
> which they originate.   For, if the myths transform
> each other, a relation of the same type links (on
> a transversal axis) the different levels involved
> in the evolution of all social life.   These levels
> range from the forms of techno-economic activity to
> the systems of representations, and include economic
> exchanges, political and familial structures, aesthetic
> expression, ritual practices, and religious beliefs." [136]

Here we are offered, by now a number of fairly obvious directives,

which taken together demand that the analysis of myth must be multi-

faceted and neither dependent on one text nor even on texts exclusively,

for the context, specifically the ethnography of the societies in

which the myths are told, is of vital importance.   The extent to

which Lévi-Strauss's analysis of myth is dependent on his knowledge

of the ethnography is often overlooked.   Even though he acknowledges

that such dependence is provisional ,provisional that is on the expansion

of the understanding of the system sufficiently so that all the

information necessary for subsequent decoding can be found within it,

the dependence is real and continuous. [137]   To relate a myth or a series

of myths to their host society, is to provide for a way of reducing

the arbitrariness inevitable in the selection of levels or in the

ordering of transformations.[138]   Myths for example which reflect

the social structure most completely can be thought of as primary,

those which do so but less completely, or less directly, can be

considered secondary transformations.[139]

On the other hand Lévi-Strauss's methodological excursions involve

a consideration of the more intangible qualities of mythical

analysis: their exhaustivity[140], their redundancy,[141] their dynamic

nature,[142] their truth,[143] the relations of form and content,[144]

and the transcendence of narrative.[145]

It is this last dimension which I want to discuss in a little more

detail, because, of course, it relates directly to the concerns of my

analysis.   Very simple, and quite obviously, Lévi-Strauss's work

involves a transcendence of the chronology of a text - and this

doubly so.   Not only is chronological ordering replaced by a

structural one, but the single text is immersed in a system of texts.

> "...every myth is an organized totality: the development
> of the narrative throws light on an underlying structure
> which is independent of the relation between what comes
> before and what comes after" [146]

This is not to suggest that the chronological and serial ordering within myth is

entirely ignored, but only that it must be of less significance, both for

Lévi-Strauss, and by implication for the natives whose myths they are.[147]

However, beneath this distinction of chronology and structure lies

a parallel but more basic one: that between the syntagmatic and the

paradigmatic.   Indeed here the relations are not so clear cut,

for depending on the initial perspective a myth can be considered

syntagmatically in terms of the chronology of its units whose

significance depends on paradigmatic relationship, or it can be

considered in toto as one unit of a paradigmatic set.   The

analysis of the important Tacana myth   /   (M303) in From Honey to Ashes

is a good example.   It reveals that   "the syntagmatic chain

formed by this myth can be changed into a paradigmatic set for the

interpretation of any of the myths of which it is a transformation,

while those myths in their turn would form a paradigmatic set capable

of throwing light on M303, if we had begun our enquiry from the

opposite end."[148]

Mythical thought, the evidence for which is presented in the myth,

     for Lévi-Strauss therefore, defines the world not so much in terms

of things, but in terms of a body of common properties, "expressible

in geometrical terms and transformable one into another by means

of operations which constitute a sort of algebra."[149]

The narratives with which we (and he) are concerned are reducible to,

and themselves constitute primary units of a field of abstract

relations whose interaction is a clue to the activity of the mind

of man.   There is then, in the patterning of these categories an

identification of a certain level of communication, let us call it

mythic.   In its independence of a specific chronology, and even in

its precedence over that chronology, it seems very much the property

of an oral culture whose tales are not so rigidly informed by the

linearity of a literate society.[150]   An explanation of this level of

communication in contemporary texts is at once an explanation of the

maintenance of the oral tradition and a measure of its significance.

I hope to be able to illustrate in Chapter 6 in what ways this can

be done for television.

One final postscript from Lévi-Strauss which seems, as ever, to

muddy the waters but also to warn again excessive dogmatisim

in the definition of what constitutes the essence of myth.   In

conversation with George Steiner he said this:

> "There are probably the same mythical structures recurring
> here and there.   But I would not claim that they are the
> same everywhere.   It is quite possible that when we have
> made sufficient progress in the study of mythology we
> shall arrive at the conclusion that there are several
> species, and not only one.   This I don't know yet."[151]

IV

The time has come to draw the methodological strings together · and

to present a model for the analysis of narrative.   There is a

temptation to add also a model of the narrative, but that remains

to be determined.   This study, hopefully will begin that process,

but the epistemological and ontological problems associated with

the notion of structure seem irresolvable.   It will be as well

briefly, to remind ourselves what they are.

There are two related aspects: firstly the question of whether the

structures really exist, or whether they are only the product of

the analyst's imagination;and secondly whether the results gained

through structural analysis can in any meaningful sense be falsified.

but
To attempt an answer to these questions is to reduce/not to erase

the ambiguity associated with the method.   The object is the

unconscious - the cultural rather than the individual unconscious;

and certain assumptions are made about it;   it is assumed to be

rational, though not necessarily exclusively so, and it is assumed

that in its activity it creates order in a world of chaos.   It can

be demonstrated that what is produced in that activity is ordered,

and that order is a precondition for a minimal degree of communication.[152]

It is self evident that people act in an ordered fashion. What is being attempted is the identification of the links between manifest action, in the broadest sense, and latent structures such that the former becomes explicable in terms of the latter. Insofar as structures are acted upon, or acted within, they can be tested. That testing depends, as Raymond Boudon points out, on the nature of the object which we are studying.[153] We assume it is systemic. If we can define its limits and if these limits are clear and real, then testability is possible; if they are not then we cannot directly test our results. The difference between a kinship system and a social system, between Lévi-Straussian structuralism and Parsonian structural-functionism, is crucial in this regard. But this testability is not the same as falsification in Popperian terms;[154] as we have seen the notion of structure itself is based on assumptions which in the final resort are arbitrary. In that sense all that can be done is to offer an account, of course philosophically based, but theoretically grounded, which within the limits it itself defines and within limits defined in reality by its object, offers coherence.[155]

This coherence is provisional. It is also metaphorical. Structures therefore are neither real nor the product exclusively of a fertile imagination. As Jean Piaget suggests structures exist somewhere "between the theoretical design partially related to the observer's decisions and the actual organisation of the behaviour to be explained."[156]

Our texts then are real. We do tell stories. We do produce and listen to narratives. The object of our investigation is clearly defined. It is quite obviously ordered. It makes sense. On the other hand our analyses of that sense, our explanations of it, may be

various and they will be endless. We can improve on them, but we cannot finally and unambiguously choose between them. In the absence of these final criteria, criteria which it has been argued do not even exist in the natural sciences,[157] we are forced into making judgements of adequacy in more humble terms. Although, as we have seen, in the last analysis the theory on which our perception of structure and structures is based is arbitrary, we have criteria for choice at our disposal, which some would call aesthetic,[158] others economic,[159] and which in terms of generality, coherence, simplicity, even elegance make one more persuasive, more adequate even, than an other. The claims of structuralism are those, and the ambiguity is intended, of a positive hermeneutics. It is an ambiguity centrally grounded in the activity of the human sciences, an ambiguity explored preeminently by Max Weber,[160] and restated though in different terms by Claude Lévi-Strauss in his own recent defence of his epistemology.

> "The value of the epistemological model offered by
> structuralism to the human sciences cannot be compared
> to the models available so far. Structuralism uncovers
> a unity and a coherence within things which could not be
> revealed by a simple description of the facts somehow
> scattered and disorganized before the eyes of knowledge.
> It also does this more economically, with a very small
> number of principles, axioms, and rules which, in a variety
> of domains, have proved their fecundity. But structuralism
> does not presume to contain the truth. It is content to
> say that things are a little clearer today than they were
> yesterday."[161]

With this epistemological excursion undertaken, but not forgotten, I can now outline, in summary form, the model of the television narrative which will be empirically illustrated and explored in the subsequent chapters.

The model presented in figure 3 is that of the narrative which
and the previous one
discussion in this chapter /would lead us, I hope, to expect. It

is of course, a schematic presentation and should be treated with

caution.   It is itself a summary.[162]

A MODEL OF NARRATIVE

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                EXPRESSION                │
│                                          │
│               Substance                  │
│      (e.g. in television/film:  image, noise
│        phonetic sound, music, titles)    │
│      ────────────────────────────────    │
│                  Form                    │
│      (e.g. in film 'la grande syntagmatique).
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                 CONTENT                  │
│                                          │
│               Substance                  │
│        (Events of the everyday world)    │
│      ────────────────────────────────    │
│                  Form                    │
│               (narration)                │
│                                          │
│   Chronologic                  Logic     │
│   (Sequence)                 (Schemata)  │
│                                          │
│   Function ____ 'Actant' ____ Qualification
│              (Acting Unit)    (Category) │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
            ┌──────────────────┐
            │  Transformation  │
            │ (Equilibration)  │
            └──────────────────┘
         ┌──────────────────────┐
         │      DISCOURSE       │
         │ (e.g. Television: and sub-
         │ discourses:  e.g. news,
         │ drama etc.           │
         └──────────────────────┘
```

FIGURE III

The primary distinction that can be made is between content
and expresion; a distinction which reflects the obvious fact that
the same story can be told in different ways by different media.

In the context of an analysis of the television narrative the
expression is the chronological ordering of, pre-eminently,
picture and sound. To understand its form we define its constituent
units; the simplest of which is the shot, the most complex of which,
in its juxtaposition of visual and aural patterning, is the sequence.
In television or in film the visual is, in a certain sense, preeminent.
By virtue of it we are made aware of space and movement, and of
discontinuities which may or may not (each is significant) synchronise
with the non-spatial movement and discontinuities in the aural
dimension. Picture and speech sometimes coincide, sometimes they
do not. Movement through a televised text is uneven but controllable.

It is also controlling. Our perception of the content of a text
is mediated - precisely - by the patterns imposed on it by the nature
of video tape or film strip. The units defined at this level are
basic, but transcendable. They are transcended as soon as one moves
attention away from the medium to its content, away from expression
to substance. This movement is, of course, circular. We are able
to make distinctions of expression because we have already understood
the content. We can focus on the set of codes that define the
particularity of the medium because we have already understood,
unconsciously perhaps, those codes which make the text coherent,
that give it sense.

Associated with this distinction in the hands of Christian Metz, is
the distinction between film and cinema, between the specifically
and exclusively filmic and that which is available to the film to use. [163]

In a parallel sense we can suggest a distinction between television and the televisual. The narrative of television is the narrative of expression, the chronology of sight and sound, the chronology of pre-eminently though not exclusively, of video. It is a chronology of the camera and the microphone, of cut and continuity, of movement of body and of movement of voice.

The televisual narrative, on the other hand, is the narrative of content. It is the what rather than the how. It is heard and seen, of course, but it is not dependent on the particular combination of sound and vision that television generates. It is the narrative available equally to television or to film, to the theatre, to the novel, or to myth. We can say, quite obviously, that all these different media could tell the same story, albeit in a different way.

That difference, however, imprecise, is nevertheless important. Narrative becomes televisual because it is televised. A tale is altered and limited in its telling by the medium of expression through which it is told. There are then two sources of constraint within a televised text: the constraint of television, of its expression, and the constraint of the televisual, that which comes to television already (partially) defined. It is to this, to narrative as such, that we need now to turn.

The content of the narrative, like its expression, has two dimensions: form and substance. The latter is easy to deal with analytically but far from easy in practical terms, for what acts as substance of the content of the television message, as for all other so-called mass media of communication, are the events, attitudes

and values of the everyday commonsense world. What becomes the
substance of the content (strictly the purport[164]) has a life
of its own outside the specific narrative which includes it.

To understand the narrative, then,involves stepping outside it,
and this stepping outside in turn involves a familiarity with all
the codes at work in the culture which acts as its host. This
is, in any sense, an impossible task. In distant societies, both
in time and space, the problem is eased but not erased by the
relative simplicity of the culture, but also the relative poverty
of our ethnographic knowledge. In our own society we are faced
with a complexity and with rapid change; our knowledge of it, never
strictly ethnographic, is suffused by doubt and contradiction. We
are inside it and no amount of theoretical distance can avoid the
ultimate impossibility of the complete understanding of the content
of our own culture.[165] It is like disentangling a ball of string
from the inside.

More accessible perhaps, though not without its difficulties, is
the form of the content, the narration as such. The bulk of this
chapter, in terms of the theories, pre-eminently of Vladimir Propp,
A.J. Greimas and Claude Lévi-Strauss, has been devoted to it.
The narration has two dimensions, both present but not always
equally, and different genres of story-telling can be identified
by the relative strength of one rather than the other. On the
one hand the diachronic, on the other the synchronic, or what have
been called here the chronologic and the logic. Narratives are
told both in time and space, or, following Lévi-Strauss, in non-
reversible and reversible time. They consist of events, subjects/
objects and descriptions, just as sentences consist of verbs, nouns
and adjectives.

In its analysis, we can and we have distinguished various levels.
To speak of chronology is to speak, like Propp, of morphology and
function, of significant units of action.   A function is significant
in terms of its contribution to the movement of the narrative as a
whole; it is significant if its absence would alter the sense of
the narrative, or its integrity.   Functions are acts, and acts may
be of different types, and of different modalities- intentioned,
threatened, completed, incomplete, successful or unsuccessful.   Not
all acts, however, have the same functional significance.   The
preparations leading to a murder are only significent once the murder
has been attempted; and it is the act, be it successful or otherwise,
which will be functional in the Proppian sense. [166] A manifest act may
be functional in more than one way; equally a number of different acts
may together fulfil one function.[167]

However, this same unit, which in the morphology can be called the
sequence,has a different value in the context of reversible time of
the narrative's logic.   Lévi-Strauss identifies the movement as
between sequence and schemata, and short of inventing a more barbarous
neologism in a text that already has its fair share of jargon, we
might accept this distinction. [168]

Narratives,and especially mythic narratives, contain therefore a
double movement, and the actions of the hero, in their sequence, do not
by themselves contain the full measure of meaning.   These actions are
metaphoric - in A.J. Greimas' terms they are anthropomorphic - and
they enact logical transformations much more central to the integrity
of mythic communication.   At this level of analysis the concern is more
with the contextualization and connotation of the act.   But even this
can be pushed further, to the level of a formula or logical model,
and then the concrete is left far behind.   This involves a reduction

of the logic of narrative, indeed the reduction of the logic of

any semiotic system, to the play of an abstract formula.[169]   And

this reduction, finally, suggests and attempts to define in what

narrative's basic units consist; its balance and its equilibrium.[170] :

What links, in effect, the function and the qualification, the act

and the category, and temporal and the intemporal, are the actors

in the narrative themselves. Let us be clear about what we mean

here. We are no more concerned with individual characters in a

play than we are with actors who, on television, play them. The

notion of 'actant ' (acting unit)[171] defines a reductive level at

which the various characters in diverse narratives, can be seen to

be functionally identical. The acting unit, be he the hero, the

villain, the dispatcher, the dispatched, the sort for person; or

helper/opposer, exists by virtue of his involvement in functional

acts, an involvement which whilst still at the anthropomorphic level

moves the narrative from one category to another. The hero in his
                                                              is
movement from situation to situation, from act to act,/transformed

by virtue of his different involvements. No only is the chronologic

defined by these movements: the hero having gained help, triumphs

over the villain and finds his happiness; but the logic also follows

that movement: the hero, now on earth, now among the stars, now with

the help of a jaguar, now with the help of a tortoise, defines the

pattern of meanings which the narrative also produces and upon which

it depends.

The transformations effected through the function of structure and

qualification, chronologic and logic, generate a coherence which in

its particularity we might wish to call the discourse.[172]   We can

talk of narrative discourse, of the television discourse, but we

can equally talk of sub-discourses, that of the play, the documentary,

the advertisement, the news and so on. There is no reason why a
model such as this should not be useful in defining the various discourses
in which narrative is manifested, to define the particular balances
of chronology and logic, of variation in form and substance of
expression, as well as the differences of substantial content which
distinguish them.

I began this chapter by quoting the enigmatic Marshall McLuhan:
"There is simply no time for the narrative form borrowed from print
technology." Television, in its picture and its synaesthesia
destroys chronology. I don't think that it does. Rather, television
through the electronic technology of sound and picture shifts the
balance in the pattern of its communication away from the dominance
of linearity and towards the equilibrium of reversible and non-reversible
time. In this it reasserts the particularity of mythic narrative -
the balance and resolution of the novel and the familiar, of stability
of change, of frustration and achievement. Television's narratives
are mythic; they are in equal part mask, mirror and exemplar.

Such narratives are defined as much by their form as by their function.
Within them the work of reading has, very largely, been done. The
reader's involvement, with the narrative, in its risk and in its
desire,[173] is constrained by the rigour of its structuring. Mythic
narratives are, in everything but detail, largely predictable. In
television this is also the case. Mythic narrative also, despite
the unique chronology of a given text, is buried within an eternally
recursive system in which endings are relativized and beginnings
insubstantial. Television, is equally, both endless and beginningless.

The model I have suggested for the study of narrative allows us to make
some of these distinctions and to explore them both for television and
for other media. It is the task of the next two chapters to illustrate
how this might be done.

Chapter 4. Footnotes and References

1.   Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, The Medium is the Massage.
      New York. 1967.

2.   But this is the case with many semiotic studies see   :
           Stephen Heath, Film and System: Terms of Analysis. Part 1
      Screen.16.1. Spring 1975 7-77, and Part 2. Screen. 16.2. Summer
      1975. 91-113; idem. Narrative Space. Screen 17.3. Autumn 1976.
      68-112; and see also Raymond Bellour, The Obvious and the Code.
      Screen. Winter 1974/5 Volume 15.4. 4-17; Kristin Thompson and
      David Bordwell, Space and Narrative in the Films of Ozu. Screen.
      17. 2. Summer 1976. 41-73; Edward Branigan. The Space of Equinox
      Flower. Screen. 17. 2. Summer 1976 74-105; Phillip Drummond,
      Textual Space in 'Un chien Andalou'. Screen. Autumn 1977. Vol.
      18. 3. 55-119.

3.   see below pp. 205ff.

4.   Vladimir Propp, Morphology of the Folktale. Austin and London.
      1968. Propp subsequently weakened and then deviated from the
      position which he argues in the Morphology, see: idem. Les
      Transformations des Contesfantastiques. in Tzvetan Todorov (Ed.),
      Théories de la Littérature. Paris. 1965. 234-262 (Abridged and
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      139-150.); idem. Generic Structure in Russian Folktale. Genre.
      IV. September 1971. No. 3.

5.   Morphology of the Folktale. ibid. p. 3-18.

6.   for example: Victor Shklovsky, Art as Technique, in Lee T. Lemon
      and Marion J. Rees, (Eds.), Russian Formalist Criticism. Lincoln,
           Nebraska   . 1968. 3-23.

7.   Boris M. Eikhenbaum, The Theory of the Formal Method, in Ladislav
      Matejka and Krystyna Pomorska, Readings in Russian Poetics.
      Cambridge, Mass. 1971. 3-37.

8.   Roman Jakobson; see The Dominant, in L. Matejka and K. Pomorska
      op. cit. p. 83-87; and the discussion in Joseph achek, The
      Linguistic School of Prague. Bloomington. 1966.

9.   of course poetics begins with Aristotle, Poetics. (London. 1963).

10.   see Victor Erlich, Russian Formalism. History-Doctrine. The
      Hague. 1965. esp. Chapter VI; Jan Broekman, Structuralism.
      Moscow-Prague-Paris. The Hague. 1974; Frederic Jameson, The Prison
      House of Language. Princeton. 1972; and in a different vein,
      on Eisenstein in particular: Peter Wollen, Signs and Meaning in
      the Cinema. London. 1972.

11.   Roman Jakobson, Recent Russian Poetry. Sketch 1. Prague 1921.
      p. 11. quoted by Boris Eikhenbaum, op. cit. p. 8. "The object
      of study in literary science is not literature but 'literariness',
      that is, what makes a given work a literary work."

12.   Boris Eikhenbaum. op. cit. p. 4.

13. *ibid*. p. 12.

14. *ibid*. p. 16.

15. *ibid*. p. 16-17; cf. E.R. Curtius. European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages. op. cit.

16. cf. the claims being made for autonomy in the study of language, by Saussure, and in sociology, by Durkheim. Chapter 2 above.

17. Boris Eikhenbaum op. cit. p. 18.

18. Russian Formalism. op. cit. p. 349.

19. The Morphology of the Folktale. op. cit. 65.

20. *ibid*. p. 18.

21. *ibid*. p. 21.

22. for a discussion, see below pp. 170.

23. *ibid*. p. 25-65; 149-155 and Appendix 2 below.

24. see the comments in particular of Alan Dundes, The Morphology of North American Folktales. F.F. Communication No. 195. Helsinki. 1964; Bertol Natthorst, Formal or Structural Studies of Traditional Tales. Stockholm. 1969.

25. Morphology of the Folktale. op. cit. 104-5.

26. *ibid*. 79 ff.

27. *ibid*. 104 ff.

28. *ibid*. p. 10.

29. *ibid*. p. 16.

30. *ibid*. p. 99.

31. Claude Bremond, Le Message Narratif. Communications 4. 1964. 4-32; La Logique des possibles narratifs. Communications. 8. 1966. 60-76; Morphology of the French Folktale. Semiotica. 2. 1970. 247-276; Combinaisons Syntaxiques Entre Fonctions et Sequences Narratives, in A.J. Greimas, (Ed.), Signs, Language, Culture. The Hague. 1970. 585-590; Logique du Récit. Paris. 1973.

32. cf. Bertol Natthorst op. cit. but note that Propp was by no means unaware of the variations possible within a tale; op. cit. 92 ff. and also Les Transformations des Contes fantastiques. op. cit.

33. esp. Morphology of the French Folktale op. cit.

34. cf. Frank Kermode, The Sense of an Ending, Oxford. 1967.

35. A summary of these criticisms can be found in Rosalind Coward and John Ellis, _Language and Materialism_. London. 1977.

36. Roland Barthes, _S/Z_. London. 1975. p. 6.

37. Dell Hymes, Breakthrough into Performance. in Dan Ben-Amos and Kenneth Goldstein. _op. cit_.

38. Claude Lévi-Strauss, Reflections on a Work by Vladimir Propp. _op. cit_.

39. and see Claude Lévi-Strauss' postscript _ibid_. p. 145. and reference to the Italian Edition of the Morphology: _Morfologia della fiabra_. ed. G.L. Bravo. Turin. 1966.

40. _op. cit_. p. 132.

41. _ibid_. p. 138; 145.

42. cf. Vladimir Propp, in Pierre Maranda _op. cit_. p. 145: "In order to establish these principles we must consider the tale in relation to its context, the situation in which it was created and in which it exists. Here, everyday life and religion, in the widest sense of the word, are of the greatest importance, since the reasons for transformations are exterior to the tale and we will not be able to understand their evolution without relating the tale itself to the human context in which it exists."

43. Claude Lévi-Strauss. _op. cit_. 142.

44. _Morphology of the Folktale_. _op. cit_. 86-91.

45. on the limitations of Lévi-Strauss's claim to produce a semantics see Dan Sperber, _Rethinking Symbolism_. Cambridge. 1975.

46. Claude Lévi-Strauss. _op. cit_. p.141.

47. Eleazor Meletinsky, Structural-Typological Study of the Folktale. _op. cit_. p. 258.

48. see footnote 44 above.

49. _ibid_. p. 91.

50. see Chapter 3 above.

51. _La Structure et la Forme_. _op. cit_. p. 17.

52. Reflections of the Work of Vladimir Propp. _op. cit_. 130.

53. _op. cit_. 257.

54. _Morphology of the North American Indian Folktale_. _op. cit_. 43-47.

55. _op. cit_. p. 258.

56. see footnote 122 below.

57. A.J. Greimas. _Sémantique Structurale_. Paris. 1966. (2nd ed., 1969); _Du Sens_. Paris. 1970; Les actants, les acteurs et les figures, in Claude Chabrol (Ed.), _Sémiotique, Narrative et Textuelle_. Paris. 1973. 161-173; The Interpretation of Myth, in P. & E.K. Maranda. _Structural Analysis of Oral Tradition_. Philadelphia. 1971. 81-121; _idem_. and Francois Rastier. The Interaction of Semiotic Constraints. _Yale French Studies_. 41. (1968) 86-105; _Maupassant_. Paris. 1976; _Sémiotique et Sciences Sociales_. Paris 1976; for a review of the more recent developments in Greimas' theory and in French studies of narrative in general see, Ernst Ulrich Grosse. French Structuralist Views on Narrative Grammar, in Wolfgang U. Dressler and Walter de Gruyter. _Current Trends in Text Linguistics_. Berlin. 1978. 156-73.

58. see especially _Sémantique Structurale. op. cit._

59. Jonathan Culler, _Structuralist Poetics_. London. 1975 esp. p. 88 ff. and Claude Chabrol, De Quelque problèmes de grammaire narrative et textuelle, in Calude Chabrol, _op. cit._ p. 1-28.

60. in any case Greimas' theories are constantly developing; see E.U. Grosse _op. cit._

61. see below p.196,and footnote 122.

62. _Du Sens. op. cit._ p. 166-8.

63. cf. Tzvetan Todorov. _Grammaire du Décameron. op. cit._

64. _Du Sens. op. cit._ p. 168. "Le _faire_ est donc une opération doublement anthropomorphe: en tant qu'activité, ell présuppose un sujet; en tant que message, elle est objectivée et implique l'axe de transmission entre destinateur et destinataire."

65. _ibid_. p. 159.

66. The Interpretation of Myth. _op. cit._ p. 104.

67. _Du Sens op. cit._ p. 261

68. _Sémantique Structurale. op. cit._ 211.

69. In Greimas' view, the basic structure of narrative, and indeed of all meaning (see below) consists in an abstract logic; Lévi-Strauss, notwithstanding his concern with the binary and the canonic formula of the narrative, nevertheless focuses on a concrete logic, a logic expressed through empirical categories.

70. but see _Sémantique Structurale. op. cit._ esp. 50-54

71. _Du Sens. op. cit._ 181-2.

72. See Appendix 3.

73. _Sémantique Structurale. op. cit._ 40-54.

74. and also The Interpretation of Myth. op. cit.

75. Sémantique Structurale. op. cit. 192 ff.

76. but note that Propp himself acknowledges that as being possible,
    actually important, see Morphology of the Folktale. op. cit. 64-5.

77. Elements d'une grammaire narrative. in A.J. Greimas. Du Sens.
    op. cit. 157-182.

78. Sémantique Structurale. op. cit. 195.

79. Du Sens. op. cit. 175; Sémantique Structurale. op. cit. 192 ff.

80. Sémantique Structurale op. cit. 203.

81. see Roger Silverstone, An Approach to the Structural Analysis of
    the Television Message. Screen Vol. 17. No. 2. 1976. 9-40 and
    Appendix 3 below.

82. Morphology of the Folktale. op. cit. 104-5.

83. Claude Chabrol op. cit.; Bertol Nathorst op. cit.; Claude
    Brémond. op. cit.

84. Claude Brémond, Logique du Récit. op. cit. p. 327: "..notre
    prétension à dégager des universaux (un lexique et une syntaxe
    applicables à toute espèce de texte narratif éxistant òu imaginable)
    est fondée: ce qui ne signifie pas que la métaphysique qui en
    derive soit vraie, mais qu'il est impossible à l'homme, s'il veut
    communiquer a d'autres hommes le récit d'une expérience humaine,
    de ne pas s'engager dans un tel systeme de roles."

85. Sémantique Structurale. op. cit. 201.

86. Élements d'une grammaire narrative. op. cit.

87. Morphology of the Folktale. op. cit. 79 ff.

88. Etienne Souriou, 200,000 Situations dramatiques. quoted in
    Sémantique Structurale. op. cit. 175.

89. ibid. p. 80.

90. Jonathan Culler, Structuralist Poetics. op. cit.

91. Les actants, les acteurs et les figures. op. cit. 176.

92. Sémantique Structurale. op. cit. 208 ff.

93. Du Sens. op. cit. 176.; The interaction of Semiotic Constraints.
    op. cit. p. 87.

94. Elements d'un grammaire narrative. op. cit. p. 160 ff.; this model
    is presented as axiomatic. see The Interaction of Semiotic
    Constraints. op. cit.

95. Logique du Récit. op. cit. 92 ff.

96. The Interaction of Semiotic Constraints. op. cit. 88;
Du Sens. op. cit. 138.

97. Structurale Sémantique. op. cit. 211-212

98. Du Sens. op. cit. 177. cf. Claude Brémond. op. cit. 96-101.

99. Claude Lévi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology. Vol. 1. op. cit. 228.

100. The Interaction of Semiotic Constraints. op. cit. 89; Du Sens.
op. cit. 138.

101. Logique du Récit. op. cit.

102. Greimas' more recent work has nevertheless kept the relationship
between theory and textual analysis alive. see Maupassant.
op. cit.

103. cf. footnote 102.; Sémantique Structurale. op. cit. 233; The
Interpretation of Myth. op. cit. 121.

104. Jonathan Culler. op. cit. 40-54.

105. in Edmund Leach, Structural Study of Myth and Totemism. op. cit.;
and Structural Anthropology. Vol. 2. op. cit.

106. Mythologiques. 4. vols. op. cit.

107. and in particular see Eleazor Meletinsky, Structural-Typological
Study of the Folktale. op. cit.; Bertel Nathhorst, Formal and
Structural Studies of Traditional Tales. op. cit.

108. Structural Anthropology. Vol. 2. op. cit. p. 132.

109. Clifford Geertz. The Interpretation of Cultures. op. cit. 355.

110. E.N. Hayes and T. Hayes, (Eds.) Claude Lévi-Strauss. The
Anthropologist as Hero. op. cit. passim.

111. The Raw and the Cooked. op. cit. p. 15.

112. Not entirely, of course, for Greimas too, looks beyond the
specific narrative.

113. The Structural Study of Myth, Chapter XI in Structural Anthropology
Vol. 1. op. cit. 206-231.; The Story of Asdiwal. 146-197; Four
Winnebego Myths, 198-210, The Sex of the Sun and the Moon, 211-221;
in Structural Anthropology. Vol. 2. op. cit.

114. see especially, in addition, The Course in General Linguistics.
op. cit.; Roman Jakobson, Six Lectures on Sound and Meaning.
Hassocks, Sussex. 1978; Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle,
Fundamentals of Language. The Hague. 1956.

115. Structural Anthropology. Vol. 1. op. cit. p. 210.

116 ibid. p. 212.

117. The Story of Asdiwal, in Edmund Leach, op. cit. 17.

118. <u>Structural Anthropology</u>. Vol. 1. 213-6 <u>op. cit</u>.

119. <u>ibid</u>. p. 219 ff.

120. cf. Mary Douglas, <u>Purity and Danger</u>. <u>op. cit</u>.; Edmund Leach,
Anthropological Aspects of Language: Animal Categories and
Verbal Abuse in E.H. Lenneberg. <u>op. cit</u>. 23-63; <u>idem</u>., Profanity
and Context. <u>New Scientist</u>. 20. October 1977. 136-9.; <u>idem</u>.,
<u>Culture and Communication</u>. <u>op. cit</u>.

121. <u>Structural Anthropology</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. Vol. 1. 228.

122. Eli-Koija Kongas and Pierre Maranda, Structural Models in Folklore.
<u>Midwest Folklore</u>. Fall. 1962. Vol. XII No. 3. 133-192.

123. <u>From Honey to Ashes</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 249.

124. <u>The Raw and the Cooked</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 12.

125. <u>Structural Anthropology</u>. Vol. 1. <u>op. cit</u>. 28 and 85-6; cf. C.R.
Badcock, <u>Lévi-Strauss</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 50-52.; James A. Boon, <u>From
Symbolism to Structuralism</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 76 ff.

126. Roman Jakobson and Moris Halle, <u>op. cit</u>.

127. see footnote 70 Ch. 3 above.

128. <u>Structural Anthropology</u>. Vol. 2. <u>op. cit</u>. 220.

129. <u>The Raw and the Cooked</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 199.; cf. A.J. Greimas' discussion
of 'isotopy' esp. in The Interpretation of Myth. <u>op. cit</u>.

130. <u>ibid</u>.

131. <u>ibid</u>.

132. <u>From Honey to Ashes</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 155-60.

133. <u>The Raw and the Cooked</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. p. 5. and 118; The Story of
Asdiwal. in Edmund Leach, <u>op. cit</u>.

134. <u>ibid</u>.

135. <u>op. cit</u>. and continues in <u>The Origin of Table Manners</u>. <u>op. cit</u>.
468 and 471 ff.

136. Comparative Religions of Nonliterate People. <u>Structural
Anthropology</u> Vol. 2. <u>op. cit</u>. 65.

137. <u>From Honey to Ashes</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 354-6. Myths in any case comprise
a closed system. see. <u>The Origin of Table Manners</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 468.

138. cf. Marshall Sahlins, <u>op. cit</u>.

139. <u>The Raw and the Cooked</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 334.

140. <u>ibid</u>. 147-8.

141. <u>The Origin of Table Manners</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 129-30, 195.

142. <u>From Honey to Ashes</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 228-9, 354.

143. The Raw and the Cooked. op. cit. 240.

144. ibid. p. 92.; From Honey to Ashes. op. cit. 466.; Structural
      Anthropology Vol. 2. op. cit. 115, 145, 268.

145. The Raw and the Cooked. op. cit. 118; From Honey to Ashes.
      op. cit. 355-6.

146. The Raw and the Cooked. op. cit. 111.

147. cf. James A Boon, Lévi-Strauss and Narrative. Man. (New Series)
      Vol. 5. No. 4. Dec. 1970. 702-3.

148. From Honey to Ashes. op. cit. 356.

149. ibid. p. 473.

150. Benjamin Colby and Michael Cole. Culture, Memory and Narrative,
      in Robin Horton and Ruth Finnegan (Eds.), Modes of Thought.
      London. 1973. 63-91, and see Chapter 3 above.

151. Claude Lévi-Strauss; in George Steiner, A Conversation with
      Claude Lévi-Strauss. Encounter. April 1966. Vol. XXVI. No. 4. 32-8.

152. cf. Hugh Dalziel Duncan, Communication and Social Order. Oxford
      1962.; Kenneth Burke, Language and Symbolic Action. Berkeley.
      1966; idem. Terms for Order. Bloomington. 1964; idem. A Rhetoric
      of Motives. New York. 1955.

153. Raymond Boudon, The Uses of Structuralism. London. 1971.

154. inter alia. Karl Popper, The Logic of Scientific Discovery.
      London. 1959; idem., Conjectures and Refutations. London.
      1963.

155. see footnote 161 below.

156. Jean Piaget, Interdisciplinary Research, London. 1973. p. 25.;
      cf. Tzvetan Todorov, La Grammaire du Décameron. op. cit. p. 9:
      "...c'est précisement l'utilisation d'une méthode qui definait
      telle où telle science. L'unité de celle-ci se fait à partir
      d'un objet théorique, c'est-à-dire de sa méthode." and Jean
      Piaget, Structuralism. London. 1971.

157. cf. R.H. Brown, A Poetic for Sociology. Cambridge. 1977; and for
      natural science, perhaps the most extreme form of epistemological
      anarchism/dadaism is Paul Feyerabend, Against Method: Outline of
      an Anarchist Theory of Knowledge. in Michael Radnor and Stephen
      Winokur (Eds.), Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science.
      Vol. 4. Minneapolis. 1962.

158. for example R.H. Brown, op. cit.

159. see below, footnote 161.

160. Max Weber, Objectivity in the Social Sciences. in E. Shils and
      Finch (Eds.), The Methodology of the Social Sciences. New York
      1949.

161.   Structural Anthropology. Vol. 2. op. cit. p. ix.

162.   cf. Seymour Chatman, New Ways of Analysing Narrative Structure
        with an example from Joyce's Dubliners. Language and Style.
        Vol. 2. No. 1. Winter. 1969. 3-36; idem. Towards a Theory of
        Narrative. New Literary History. Vol. 6. Winter. 1975. No. 2.
        295-318. In the latter Chatman presents a model of narrative
        more complex though in essentials similar to the one offered here,
        though in one respect he seems to misrepresent the Hjemsle ian
        categories which lie at the heart of his, as well as my, drafting -
        in particular in the terms of the substance and form of expression.
        see. p. 300; cf. Christian Metz. in Chapter 2 above; and Roland
        Barthes. Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits. op. cit.

163.   Christian Metz, Language and Cinema op. cit. and see Chapter 2
        above.

164.   Louis Hjemslev, Prolegomena to a Theory of Language. op. cit.

165.   cf. Jean Pouillon, L'analyse des mythes. L'homme. 6. (1) 1966.
        100-105. p. 104: "The indigenous one - and who is not indigenous? -
        does not understand the myth that charms him, not because of
        intellectual incapacity, but because of position; it is also
        because of position that the ethnologist, because he knows other
        myths elsewhere, can understand it." quoted in J.A. Boon From
        Symbolism to Structuralism. op. cit. p. 162.

166.   cf. Tzvetan Todorov. Structural Analysis of Narrative. Novel.
        Vol. 3. No. 1. Fall 1969. p. 74: "Sequence is perceived by the
        reader as a finished story; it is the minimal narrative in a
        completed form." Seymour Chatman, following Roland Barthes
        op. cit., distinguishes between kernels and catalysts in narrative
        chronology; the kernel is equivalent to Propp's function and
        loosely to Lévi-Strauss's sequence. (p. 14) "Catalysts have only
        a chronological aspect; this happens and then that happens.
        Kernels are chronological but also logical; this happens and then
        that happens because that has happened."

167.   Vladimir Propp. op. cit. 66-70.

168.   The Story of Asdiwal. Structural Anthropology. Vol. 2. op. cit.
        166.

169.   see above p. 196.

170.   see above p. 185.

171.   A.J. Greimas. Les actants, les acteurs, et les figures. op. cit.
        and above p. 186.

172.   cf. Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge. London. 1972.
        58-77.

173.   Seymour Chatman, op. cit. p. 18. talks of risk, and in so doing
        follows Roland Barthes, op. cit. see Roland Barthes, The Pleasure
        of the Text. London. 1976, and for his reverie with the 'jouissance'
        of literature and narrative.

CHAPTER V

INTIMATE STRANGERS.   MORPHOLOGY

In this and the subsequent chapter I wish to explore the structure
of a television narrative.   I intend to show in what ways a series
of television drama programmes follows quite closely the pattern for
the telling of tales already outlined and also that it constructs
its meanings in ways similar to the myths discussed by,pre-eminently
Claude Lévi-Strauss.   The television serial drama works within a
convention and that convention has both diachronic and synchronic
dimensions.   It has a clearly defined chronology and it constructs
its meanings concretely.

I am not offering a proof or even an experiment in any strict sense.
Any conclusions, subject as they are to the epistemological
qualifications already discussed, cannot be extended much beyond
the examples themselves.   However there is very little in the
experience of watching television drama which would lead me to
expect that what seems true of this series will not also be true
of others.   Indeed this series, concerned as it is with the details
of personal relationships much more than with the unequivocal action
of say a thriller or a detective drama, might be expected to be
less overt in its narrative structuring, or even less dependent
on such structuring.   The narrative of test and combat, of alienation
and integration, of success and failure is clearly more apposite to
drama of the latter type.   If it can be shown to be relevant to
a drama series of the order of Intimate Strangers then that
demonstration could well be expected to have greater significance.[1]

The set of programmes selected for analysis was the series

Intimate Strangers, produced by Richard Bates for London Weekend

Television and broadcast in thirteen weekly episodes between

September 20th and December 13th, 1974.   They were shown at

9.00p.m. on Friday evenings, peak viewing time and were watched

in between 4,344,000 and 5,874,000 homes throughout the country.[2]

A certain number of more or less intuitive considerations led to

the choice of this series.[3]   Firstly, it was felt, generally,

that the television drama, given the amount of time devoted to it

in the schedules, had been relatively poorly studied.   The drama,

and particularly the serial drama, seemed to represent as much as,

if not more than the news, for example, a central dimension of

television's production.   Secondly it seemed that a contemporary

drama (contemporary both in time of writing and in subject), would

of its very nature be more likely to illuminate the problems with

which I was to be concerned, more likely to reveal the structures

associated with folktales and myth and hence more likely to act as

a paradigm for further analysis.

Thirdly, and for similar reasons - the concern to reduce as much as

possible complications in the analysis - it seemed reasonable to

choose a series of plays which was written specifically for television

and which also contained both complete serial and complete episodic

narratives.   And finally it was hoped to avoid somewhat the problems

associated with authorship by choosing a series that was written

and/or directed by more than one individual.

Intimate Strangers fulfilled all of these criteria, though it was

not, as I've already mentioned, a series of crime or adventure, and

therefore perhaps unlikely to be as transparent, as 'dramatic' as

anything of that sort. It was contemporary, in both senses, and written especially for television. Each episode, although incorporated into the series as a whole with its own narrative coherence, was itself narratively self-contained. In addition to the normal group involvement in the production of a television series (camera, sound crews, make-up, set designers, actors, etc.) there were four directors, four writers and a producer involved in its creation.

The programmes were recorded off-air on to video-tape. The copies used for the analysis were, unfortunately, in black and white.

II

I would like, in what follows in this chapter, to discuss the chronology of the narrative in its two dimensions, that of the series as a whole and that of the episode. I will do so, in the first instance, by summarizing the plot of the series in a relatively simple and undetailed way, and then continue by discussing it in terms of the model of folktale narratives already presented. I will do the same, in more detail, for one particular episode, episode 6, and then, referring also to the narrative structures of the other episodes, more briefly summarized in appendix 8 , I will discuss the implications of this part of the analysis as a whole.

There are two methodological points which I would like to raise at this stage. The first has to do with the problems of discussing an audio-visual text in writing only. These are problems which, short of providing a set of tapes to accompany this discussion, are insuperable. There are two aspects to this problem. One cannot hope to convey the detail, both in its arrangement (mis-en-scène)

and in its movement, of the visual image. Any discussion of it is
necessarily subject to selection, and necessarily subject to the
relative arbitrariness of individual perception. Fortunately my
project does not depend on the minutiae of the visual image, although
it is of course dependent on the image as such and my perception of
it, But I am less concerned with the details of camera angle, point
of view, size of shot, or the intricacies of editing than with being
able to point out in relatively unambiguous terms dimensions of action
and movement, and of the specifics of location or dress.   I can
point to, for example, a particular location as being in a garden, or
an office, and to a man in a tie and suit or on the other hand in shirt
sleeves and tieless, with a minimum of ambiguity and, for my purposes,
the maximum of significance. This is not to say that other aspects
of the image will not be present or, for other purposes, important.

The second dimension to this problem of transcription has to do with
the narrative itself. Its more or less unselfconscious description
necessary for and prior to analysis as such, involves, inevitably
a reduction and a translation. The summary of a narrative, particularly
of one drawn from another medium is just that, a summary, and therefore
subject to question. Indeed such a summary description is structured,
and subsequent analysis could well be open to challenge on the basis
that what is being analysed is not the original text but the summary
of it. Once again, short of referring to the original texts, there
is no way of checking the accuracy or relevance of the summary, and
even then no way of defining it as final and totally adequate, as
true. If narratives are structured then one can identify and
summarize them. If they are not then no summary description will
prove any better than another or more correct. This is the first

circle from within which this analysis seeks to extract itself,

but I freely acknowledge that it is inside a circle where I begin.

The second methodological question also involves a circle, and that

has to do with the fact that both text and analysis are both the

produce of, and articulated within, the same culture.   In one

sense, this seems to me not as important as it might be, for theory and

method itself, if offered both with care and an awareness of limits,

provides some of the distance between the text and the resulting

analysis, which is more obviously present were we to be involved

in the texts of a distant and different culture.

But the implications of this difference need to be noted.   In the

case of an analysis of myth such as undertaken by Claude Lévi-Strauss,

Marcel Detienne or Edmund Leach,[4] what is involved is the elucidation

of meaning which may well be appreciated, albeit unconsciously, by

those who utter and hear the myths, but of which we, without the

benefit of such an analysis, can make little sense.[5]   Such accounts

as these mythologists offer may well be difficult to substantiate

but it may be equally correct to suggest, as Peter Caws does of

Lévi-Strauss's work in particular, that "Its greatest contribution

has been to claim for the intellect a territory which we had all

but abandoned to the absurd."[6]

This whole relationship of analyst and object is clearly very different

where that object is a television programme and where the analyst is

a member of the culture and society that produced it.   The problems

are not so much of generating conclusions that seem valid, but of

making these conclusion convincing to those who will read them;

to those who are equally members of that culture, and who by virtue

of their involvement in it and as members of a television watching

community, will in one sense have no need of such analysis. They
understand what they are watching already. The dangers here are
not of surprise or contradiction but of the banal and the obvious.
The claim for the intellect this time is for a territory that had
all but been abandoned to the trivial. The task is not to illuminate
what we have not previously understood, but to suggest the rules
according to which we understand what we do. The conclusions should
be illuminating, but they are unlikely to be entirely surprising.

III

The Series Plot

1.   It is early morning. Joan Paynter is in the garden, Harry Paynter
her husband of some thirty years, is getting dressed upstairs.
They meet for breakfast in the kitchen, and discuss their future
holiday and the likely events of the day. Harry, as usual, leaves
for work. His journey involves a drive to the station in his
veteran Bentley and a train journey to the city, where he works
as a production manager for a publishing company. At work he
delegates a job to a young member of his department. Later,
at a lunchtime meeting with his solicitor Harry is told that
their usual holiday cottage, which they had attempted to buy,
had been sold and furthermore that their holiday there was now
impossible.

    Harry returns home to find daughter Kate in residence and faces
Joan with the news. An argument ensues. Kate attempts to
ameliorate the situation, and though not without some difficulty,
Harry persuades Joan of his new holiday plans. After some
friends' thirtieth anniversary party, they make peace, but on
the following morning, Sunday, and the day when they are due
to leave for their holiday, Harry is called urgently to the
office. A problem has resulted from his delegation and Harry
must go and sort it out. He will meet Joan at the ticket barrier
at the station. He arrives just in time but as he reaches Joan
he collapses, and the train leaves without them.

2.   Harry is recovering in hospital after a heart attack, and Joan
is warned by their doctor that he has been lucky and must be
very careful in the future: no smoking, little drinking, much
exercise. Joan brings him home and settles him in bed, while
the rest of the family gather - Kate, and other daughter Judith
with her husband Matt. Matt provokes Joan with his apparent
insensitivity about his father-in-law's illness.

The recovery progresses, and Harry, Joan and Kate are relaxing
in the garden when Bob, the company secretary arrives to
discuss Harry's future. Bob wants to persuade Harry to take
an early retirement, and that refused, he then promises to
find a way of keeping Harry at work in the company. The new
job, although well packaged, seems to Harry to be worthless.
He walks out at lunchtime on the first day. On his return
home he tells Joan of what he has done and the two of them
move apart. Harry goes into the garden, Joan runs upstairs.

3.   Harry and Joan arrive, (Joan is driving a hired car) for a
      holiday in the Lake District. Harry is still expected to
      take it easy. He walks round Coniston, while Joan unpacks.
      He discovers the presence of Ruskin, an old hero of his.
      They meet the Lansons; he is a retired soldier who
      coincidentally served with Joan's late brother during the
      war. Harry and Joan reject the offer of a joint walking
      trip and subsequently their relations with the Lansons
      become estranged. Phoebe Lanson breaks down over dinner
      when reminded of the loss of their own child. The holiday,
      otherwise, continues, with Harry and Joan thinking of the
      future and remembering their past. However, a message arrives
      for Joan from Bob, Harry's old company secretary. It seems
      that Joan has been talking to Bob without Harry knowing. He
      is angry, and after a row, they decide to return home.

4.   Harry is under pressure, especially financial pressure, to find
      a job. He sees the bank manager who reluctantly agrees to
      keep supporting Harry's overdraft. Later Harry meets with an
      ageing publisher in London who cannot offer him a job, but
      does suggest someone who might be able to help.

      Tom Daniels has a new business locally. He offers Harry a
      directorship of his printing works, although at a small starting
      salary. Harry promises to think it over and suggests to Joan
      that they invite Daniels, and it transpires, his secretary/girlfriend
      to dinner. After dinner Daniels offers a share in the business
      in return for a contribution of £20,000. Harry hasn't got it,
      but he intends to raise it. His search, finally, leads him
      to a city money lender. Harry baulks at the interest asked
      and returns home empty handed.

      Joan has been against the venture from the start but they
      momentarily sink their differences on Harry's return, for
      it is Judith's birthday and she and Matt are at home when
      he arrives. However Tom arrives angrily. He has found
      out about Harry's attempt to raise money and he calls the
      whole deal off. Harry is dejected, but he remembers an
      advertisement that Matt has seen in a local paper. He goes
      to ring but it is after hours.

5.   Harry and Joan are at breakfast, but Harry is reluctant to go to work. Work, when he does arrive, is a small printing works in a converted chapel. Harry is a superior sort of salesman. There is nothing about Foster, the boss, or the two minions, Dale and Foster's secretary which he likes. He is not busy. He comes home for lunch and dawdles. He is starting to drink. His family life becomes increasingly strained. He has a row with Judith and he does not talk to Joan.

A day or so later, stepping out of his routine, Harry makes for the local at lunchtime. He meets Pat there, the owner of an office bureau, and they have lunch together. After some hesitation Harry agrees to go to London with her the following Thursday. Joan is lied to.

The trip to London involves lunch, a visit to an art gallery, and a roof garden tea. Pat suggests they go to bed together but Harry demurs. They part friends, but Harry returns home irritable. He tries to talk to Joan but fails, and can only shout at her.

His work seems to deteriorate. He rejects an offer of a lunchtime drink from Pat, and finds himself back home with his family; Joan, for whom he buys the Chinese vase that she had wanted (though it is the wrong one), and Judith and Matt, to whom he lies about his work.

But neither family nor work provide any consolation. He is threatened by Foster and is dispirited by Judith and Matt's continual rowing. He rushes round to see Pat, only to be attacked and vilified by her. Pat leaves him alone in her flat, drink in hand and almost in tears.

6.   Harry is drinking before breakfast. He is responsible for an idle works and threatened by Foster. He must produce some worthwhile orders or else. Help comes in the shape of an old friend, Stephen Kenyon, who unwittingly suggests to Joan that Harry's recent trip to London might not have been what she believed it to be.

That evening Harry is not hungry. He gets drunk and lies to Joan about his trip to London. Joan has to put him to bed and as she does so she checks in Harry's diary. She finds out that he has been lying. Kate's subsequent arrival does not really help matters, and Harry has a row with her too, envious of the amount of money she is earning.

However, the deal with Kenyon, first explored in London, and then confirmed at lunch in Tunbridge Wells with Foster present, seems to generate new hope. But while they are signing it, the apprentice Dale jams a potato up the exhaust of Harry's Bentley and the ensuing explosion prompts Harry to attack him.

Jobless, Harry returns home and Joan and he face each other
with their past and lack of future. A cathartic row leaves
both exhausted and dejected.

Early next morning Harry finds Joan walking alone in the
garden, and the first tentative steps at reconstruction are
decided upon and later tested on Kate. Harry is proposing to
start up on his own; the house and the car are to be sold.

7. Harry has found a bookshop in Tunbridge Wells. It is run by
    an ageing Miss Temple. There is a flat above and Joan
    accepts the inevitability of their move. Harry begins to
    familiarize himself with the bookshop and the bookselling
    business, while Joan tries to interpret and disguise the
    nature of their move to her friends. The car is sold, and
    they agree to sell the house.

    The contract for the purchase of the bookshop is agreed and
    they move in. Harry becomes involved. He is happy. Joan
    misses the house and on a visit there to tend the garden,
    meets the prospective buyer and her children. They discuss
    their men; Joan is anxious and upset.

    Matters are made worse by the falling through of the sale of
    their own house. Harry goes to London to see Bob and asks him
    if he can take his own pension early. Bob refuses. Meanwhile
    Joan, left to look after the shop, refuses to serve an old
    friend after a certain unpleasantness.

    Harry arrives home to find the shop closed and Joan absent.
    He goes round to the house and finds her sitting disconsolately
    in the darkened, empty, sitting room. She feels his gain to
    be her loss, and although Harry persuades her to return to the
    flat, her doubts and sorrow remain.

8. Joan is going to London for the day to buy curtain material.
    At breakfast, Harry noting her rather dowdy appearance,
    suggests she also buy a new dress and dressing gown.

    On her arrival in London she buys curtain material, a dress
    and dressing gown and shoes, and loaded with purchases, she
    walks into a hotel. She meets there an old friend, Lionel,
    who has just been stood up by a girlfriend. Lionel, she learns,
    is divorced. He buys her a drink, lunch, wine and takes her up
    to his bedroom for coffee and brandy. He persuades her to
    try on her new clothes. She is seduced.

    Joan's initial dissatisfaction and feelings of guilt are
    assuaged as they talk and she gains some insight into marriage
    and into sex. They make love again, and it is now her turn
    to cross-examine Lionel. He discusses his marriage and his
    loneliness, a conversation continued during tea in the restaurant
    downstairs.

They both go home separately: Joan to Harry, Lionel alone on
his train to Manchester. At home, in front of the television
and later in bed, Joan discusses her day with Harry, but in
the face of limited interest fails to tell him very much.

9.   The morning of a busy day. Harry is very involved in the shop,
      but Joan is depressed and distracted. She puts off a friend's
      invitation and goes to the sale of their old furniture. She
      leaves in tears. She goes to their old house and meets
      two prospective buyers. She feels rejected and Harry attacks
      her inability to contribute and her general lethargy. He tells
      her to go and see Maurice, their doctor.

      Joan does go and see the doctor, but sees instead of her
      usual, a Doctor Bowers, his female partner. She is given
      much advice and resolves to pick herself up by involving
      herself in Harry's life.

      Her first attempt to make contact with her old friends is
      rebuffed, but she goes shopping; then on to the hairdresser
      and that evening prepares Harry a special meal. It is, however,
      cut short, because Harry has to go to his painting class.
      Joan offers to meet him and his fellow class mates in the
      pub afterwards.

      That evening she does join him, and they all get on quite
      well.

      The following Sunday afternoon they are in their bedroom together.
      Harry is drawing and Joan asks him about painting and about
      bodies. She persuades him to draw her naked. He accepts the
      challenge and the two of them discover in conversation and
      finally physically a new basis for their relationship.

10.   Another Sunday. As Harry and Joan get up, he suggests that
      they buy a double bed. They go to church. Judith and Matt
      come for lunch, but have a row about a prospective trip to
      Canada.

      Judith is pregnant, but she has not told Matt. Indeed her
      decision to come off the pill was a unilateral one and Matt
      doesn't know about that either. He does not want children
      for the time being.

      Joan and Harry decide to spend the day in London and
      despite strained finances they buy a bed. While they
      are trying them out, they meet Kate and boyfriend Bob (Harry's
      old company secretary). Later the two of them have lunch, go
      to a movie and Joan spends a little time in a baby shop.

      Meanwhile Judith is consulting a doctor about an abortion;
      it fails. She is told to face Matt with what she has done.

On Joan and Harry's return they find Judith outside the door
of the shop. She and Matt have had a row and Matt has walked
out. The following morning Harry goes round to sort it out
with Matt, and together they return to patch up their quarrel.
Kate arrives to complete the family.

11. Harry and Joan travel to London for the Remembrance Sunday
     service, an event which prompts their own recollections of
     the war, their childhood and their early years together.
     This is continued with the help of a photograph album when
     they return home.

     He suggests that Joan start selling antiques in the shop,
     but Joan is disinclined. Another meeting with Harry's
     classmates in the pub is followed by their mutual comforting
     in their double bed.

     They find themselves subsequently at a party where old
     friends congratulate them for their courage and determination
     and where their own togetherness is reflected in a row that
     separates another couple.

     They visit Portsmouth together, Harry has (apparently)
     persuaded Joan to buy some antiques and they spend some
     time at an auction. They also meet in their old wartime
     local an old seaman whom they recognize and who insists on
     their going back to his place. They find the whole event
     uncomfortable.

     However, Joan manages to buy some good pieces, and they
     drive home well satisfied.

12. Harry and Joan travel to London to see their accountant.
     On Tunbridge Wells station, they meet an old colleague who
     tells them of big changes at his old place of work and that
     they are looking for a new production manager. The news
     at the accountants is gloomy. The bridging loan, because
     of the unsold house, is crippling.

     But on their return Harry is 'phoned by Bob, still at
     Turnmill, who says that the new boss wants to see Harry
     about a job. They are both uncertain, but next day Harry
     travels to London and is indeed offered a responsible and
     well paid job. He has twenty-four hours to make up his mind.

     Lunch with Bob and a public relations lady is followed by
     an interview with the lady in her bed-sitting room. They
     have a long and increasingly intimate discussion. This is
     extended into dinner and the girl suggests they go to bed
     together. Harry says no, though they part friends.

     Meanwhile, the agent responsible for the sale of the house
     has been speaking to Joan. There is a buyer and Harry has to
     decide by the following morning.

The following morning Harry indeed decides to sell the house and refuse the job. His description of what passed between him and the P.R. lady prompts Joan to tell him of Lionel. She is forgiven. Harry, though hurt, understands, and can accept it.

13.   In the middle of the night, Harry hears on the 'phone that his mother, in an old people's home, is dying. They both rush to her to her bedside to find her in a coma and a doctor waiting. They visit the chapel.

The following morning they receive a letter from Kate saying that she is setting up house with Bob, and Harry and Joan plan how to spend their wedding anniversary. Harry is given a talking to by his doctor. His mother dies.

Joan is buying and selling antiques, and Harry is busy too. Unbeknown to her, he has designed a bungalow which he plans to build with the money released by the sale of the house. Joan is delighted when she sees the model.

In the evening there is a family party: Matt, Judith, Kate and Bob join Harry and Joan for champagne and dinner. Bob gets drunk and aggressive. He finds the family oppressive, and falls off his chair pulling table cloth, crockery and cutlery on to the floor.

The following morning Bob is excused, accepted and subsequently more accepting. Kate and he have Joan and Harry's blessing. Harry then takes Joan to a field where he suggests their bungalow could be built. Does Joan like it? She does. They kiss and then separately, but together, pace their way round the imagined building.

III

In the following morphological analysis of the series narrative
I will, as far as possible, try and avoid cluttering the text with
the various symbols which identify in the Proppian and the Greimassian
schemes the different functions. These details can be found in
Appendix 2 and 3. What I want to achieve, simply, at this
stage, is to identify the chronological structure of the narrative,
its linearity, prior to showing how that linearity itself can be
interpreted in systemic terms within the framework of the equilibrium
model of narrative suggested by A.J. Greimas. Again I will not
insist on any formal correspondence between the functional notations
of Propp and Greimas, for indeed, as I have already pointed out,
these are more hazy and less complete than might appear. Finally
I will treat the analysis, for the time being only, as non-problematical.
I wish to introduce, however, the notion, specifically discussed by
A.J. Greimas, of the qualifying, the main and the glorifying tests
into this initial analysis. They satisfactorily determine the
three types of encounter the hero has during the course of the
narrative and this is useful even though for Propp they are not
distinguished quite in such terms.

A brief glance at the suggested morphology of the series narrative
(Appendix 4) will immediately call the lie to any idea that the narrative
must consist in a single linearity, for it is clear that there is,
at three points, duplication or triplication of functional sequences.
It is clear that episodes 2,3,4 and 5, with minor qualifications

have the same functional significance, and this is similarly true of 7 and 8 and part of 9 as well as 10, 11 and 12. To a degree this has to do with the existence of multiple lacks (see below), but there are also other possible explanations.

The general structure reveals itself to be closely identified with the classical Proppian model: an initial situation and lack defined (episode 1) is followed by a series of tests (2-5) each of which involves gaining help or support, prior to a significantly climactic struggle in episode 6. In a simple narrative this would be successful and subsequent tests would only confirm the achievement of the hero.[8] In this narrative however this significant struggle ends in failure and while the narrative preserves the functions of acknowledgement, transformation and wedding, they are manifested negatively. The narrative could have ended here, but it would have been incomplete, inresolved. A new narrative is called for, and at the end of episode 6, with its continuation in episode 7, it is defined.

A new initial situation precedes a further series of qualifying tests whose hero, interestingly, is Joan rather than Harry. Once again these tests (7 and 8 and part of 9) generate another significant confrontation, successfully achieved this time. The three following episodes (10, 11 and 12) function as further, almost self-congratulatory units, and they in turn lead to a final episode which is predominantly concerned with the re-unification of the family, indeed the 'wedding' and transformation of the two heros.

Let us look at each episode more closely, bearing in mind that the

concern is not with the details of its own functioning but in its

functional contribution to the series narrative as a whole.   Only

in episode 6 and part of episode 9 do the two coincide.

That the first episode is scene setting is obvious.   Harry's

relationship to Joan, their relationship to the rest of the family, to

their environment, and to work constitutes in Proppian terminology

an initial situation.   Clearly too the heart attack at the end of

the episode, the catalyst of the action for the series narrative,

functions as a lack.   The precise nature of this lack, however,

is not so obvious, for it is not just physical health.   Subsequent

developments play out what is still either only implicit in, or

causally dependent on, the action of the episode.   What is implicit

is the lack in Joan and Harry's relationship, let us call it social

health.   What follows as a direct result of the heart attack is

Harry's loss of job, let us call it cultural health.   I will discuss

this more fully shortly.

I am suggesting that there is implicit in this first episode an

order, or perhaps more reasonably a violation of an order.   This

is implicit, but it is warranted for without it the lack which follows

itself is unjustified.   We need to know, because the narrative

subsequently is involved in effecting a resolution to the question,

why it is that Harry has a heart attack.   There is in this episode,

and indeed in the series as a whole, no clearly defined villain or

dispatcher whose manifest involvement in the narrative at this stage

would make these functions explicit.   We can talk of fate taking

a hand, and this indeed is perhaps the best way of identifying the

deus ex machina.   But we can also suggest that Harry is violating an

ideal of moderation in all things, an ideal of social balance or
equilibrium, which without begging too many questions seems to be
the dominant preoccupation of the narrative as a whole.   It might,
a final paradox, even be in their 'normalcy' that they have infringed
some rule of behaviour, an infringement which identifies them as
suitable characters for the subsequent narrative.

Episode 2 begins with a series of announcements about Harry's ill
health, his lucky escape from certain death, and his need to take
it easy, to refrain from many of his normal socio-cultural activities.
A number of Propp's sub-functions (B_3, B_4, B_5) are involved in this
phase of the narrative.

In what follows (Episodes 2 - 5) this particular lack of physical
ill-health is heavily underplayed.   Much more important is the
lack of work (Episodes 2 and 4) and lack in their relationship
(Episodes 3 and 5).   But what unites all of these episodes is
their inconclusivity.   At the end of each the lack, be it cultural
or social health, is restated clearly, as having been unredeemed.
In each Harry looks for help in order to find himself, to re-establish
himself as an integrated human being, healthy in all ways.   Indeed
this idea of an integrity of cultural, social and physical health
is the underpinning lack which in these episodes are explored only
partially.   So in episode 2, this search for work, through the help
of Bob Blake ,and in episode 4 ,through a succession of individuals,
are both searches for a means to an end, that of the whole man, not
the end itself.   Similarly,though in a slightly different way,
episode 3 and 5 function as means to an end, the context this time
being lack of a relationship.   In episode 3, he and Joan are looking
for themselves in their past but remaining separate despite that
search, and in episode 5 Harry's involvement with Pat fails to generate
alternative help outside the marriage.

Episode six is more complex. Indeed the narrative is more condensed so that it seems fair to say that the series and the episodic narrative here coincide. The lack of work and of a relationship with Joan is made clear as is Harry's preparedness to remedy both. His involvements away from home have however a double significance, and there is room for alternative interpretations. The contract with Kenyon is clearly functional in a similar way to much of the action in episode two and episode four. But the help successfully gained in the sealing of the contract with Kenyon also is the key to his confrontation with Foster, the boss, and in the series as a whole, that rare species, the villain. This test then seems also to have more than just relevance as qualification: it is also a main test, which successfully completed, redeems the lack rather than just provides the aid for its redemption. This interpretation is reinforced by the action of Dale. The successful completion of the qualifying and main test is followed immediately by a second test, which, in beating Dale up, Harry fails. As a result he loses his job, his heroic status is denied and he returns to Joan a beaten and punished man. Rather than being revealed as a true hero, he is exposed as a false one, and the row which follows suggests a divorce rather than a wedding.

My only anxiety about suggesting this interpretation, lies precisely in the weakness of the main test, and its ambiguity. It is, as it were, almost defined ex post facto by virtue of the clarity of the functions which follow. But its ambiguity is very much a product of the mode in which the narrative unfolds, in other words in the underplaying of the major dramatic action and potentially final confrontation. We will find the same problem in episode 9.

The last part of episode 6 establishes a new initial situation.
In the discussion that takes place plans are made and Harry
identifies his intention to act on them.

And this thread is continued in episode 7 with Harry's acceptance
of self-employment and their move to a new home.   The rest of
episode 7 and episode 8 as a whole are similar in structure and
functional significance to episodes 3 and 5.   This time, Joan is the
centre of attention; she is the hero, though the lack of social
and cultural health remains the same.   It is now Joan who has
suffered the loss by their move: her work in the garden, and her
relationship with Harry have been severely disrupted, not to say
destroyed.   At the end of each of these episodes, as in 2 - 5,
that lack is unambiguously and negatively restated.

Episode 9 is similar in structure to, though less complete, than
episode 6, but like it series and episodic narrative to a degree
coincide.   Joan is dispatched by Harry to seek help for her general
low spirits.   She does so, and it involves her not only with the
doctor but also in the conviviality of her contact with Harry's
young friends.   The doctor clearly acts as a helper/donor, but
it is the latter encounter, together with the more intimate involvement with
Harry where the functions of a qualification test and, most significantly,
of the main test seem to coincide.   Here the villain as such, is
absent; (perhaps it is Joan?).   But it is clear that in the two
encounters Joan's social and physical identity are re-established.
Those lacks at least are redeemed.

It is then in the redemption (actual or potential) of a lack that
the main test gains its recognition.   The qualifying test generally
can be seen to be at one remove.   Only the means of the redemption

of the lack are gained.   That in some cases, such as this one,

the two are relatively indistinct does not alter the significance

of this analysis.

Joan and Harry's love-making at the end of episode 9 is in every

sense therefore a consummation, but it is also a hint of the

positive ending of the series as a whole.   In this legitimate union,

in its rediscovery, the wedding (W) is suggested but not stated.

What is absent from the episode are those functions which in the

Proppian schema follow the main test, but precede the final crowning

achievement.   These functions are provided by the three episodes

which follow in which, though again in slightly different ways,

Harry and Joan jointly test their union, and their integrity, against

the world.   In episode 10, their children Judith and her husband

Matt, and Kate provide the opposition.   In episode 11 they are

faced with their past together, but Joan also completes her identity

by her cultural involvement in buying and selling antiques.   In

episode 12 their marriage is tested by Harry's involvement with the

public relations lady and once again in the world of work, and by

Joan's revelations of her affair with Lionel.   Indeed it is these
                                                    the
episodes which confirm the centrality of/lack of social health,

the lack in their relationship in the narrative as a whole. Harry's

work, and his health are of little direct concern.

The final episode in a quite unambiguous fashion suggests the functions

of recognition, transfiguration and of the wedding.   Not only is

the anniversary party held, but Harry and Joan are dressed in new

clothes and present a new face to the rest of their family.   The

'palace' too is planned as a just reward for their joint achievements.

The series as a whole, notwithstanding the ambiguities I have

mentioned, seems to me to be an eloquent example of the sort of

narrative Propp defines in his morphology, and as such has much

of the folktale about it. Though obviously in the context of a

psycho-social drama, where help is of an intangible (but none the

less real) kind, and where conflicts are not expressed in demonstrably

physical action, the passage from initial situation to final resolution

preserves essentially the chronology particular to, since Propp,

the folktale. To say this now is not to prejudge what will

inevitably be a more considered final conclusion, but to stake a

claim for the relevance of such an analysis, and for its significance,

before both relevance and significance get buried by the sludge of

qualification.

IV

We can move a stage deeper into the analysis of the narrative structure

of the series by focussing attention on both its movement and its

balance. The question now is in what sense can this narrative be

understood in terms of a balanced and transformational structure?

A full answer must await the discussions of the next chapter where

the many layers, often over determined, through which the narrative

works its way, have been examined.

In very simple terms, and quite obviously, the narrative of the series,

Intimate Strangers, so far described, moves from one situation of

harmony, albeit unstable, (Harry and Joan's life prior to their

heart attack) to another situation of harmony, (the redefinition of

their marriage and their future plans). That the second situation is

different from the first and to an extent provides a resolution of it,

a resolution demanded as a result of the events following the heart

attack, is also trivially obvious. But it is this movement that does

demand some discussion, not only because it seems of empirical relevance

but because in the theoretical work of A. J. Gremas it is in terms of

just such a transformational structure that the narrative, and narrative

as such, gains its significance.

What is missing on the other hand from this narrative as a whole, is

a clear personification of two of the major 'actants' (acting units)

and this makes the precise nature of the opening narrative above all,

at least in Gremas', terms uncertain. The first episode, ending with

the heart attack, the unambiguous lack, fails to identify either villain

or dispatcher. In their absence and in the absence also of events which

would suggest loss of identity ($\bar{C}3$) and loss of power ($\bar{C}2$), the narrative

begins, in structural terms, rather weakly. We can postpone discussion

of why this should be so and its significance,but we are left in the

rather unsatisfactory situation of having to recognise the tacit presence

of Harry's loss of identity(self recognition) and power in this first

episode. The necessity to do so is premised on the clear evidence that

each are subsequently sought for and restored as the narrative progresses.

The heart attack is then the most clearly defined lack or loss, but as I

have already noted, this loss of physical health is accompanied by a loss

of cultural health (work) and social health (the deterioration in their

relationship). The end which Harry works towards then has this triple

valency. In order to be successful he needs information, both about the

world and about himself, and power. He loses both implicitly in the

first episode, though as we have seen from the morphological analysis so

far undertaken, neither he nor a villain are involved directly in

reconnaisance and the receipt of information, and he is not the subject of
a manifest deception.

Fate is both villain and despatcher. Implicit in its workings is the denial
of the contract that Harry has with life and with his society. The heart
attack either denies or reinforces his negative status and situation. He
is not a complete man, either physically, culturally or socially, and while
remaining in society/outside,it. By his heart attack Harry has been literally
transformed into a different being. His and Joan's subsequent action, as
the narrative progresses, involve his (and their) reconstruction and their re
incorporation into society. There is no return; the solution advances
beyond the ruptured initial situation. The denial of their alienation
and of the loss of order in their world, involves a new and different
order.

Episodes 2 - 5 and then 7 and 8 involve respectively Harry and then Joan's
search for power, the wherewithal to effect their final reintegration into
society and the regeneration of their coherent identity. In each case,
faced with potential helper or helpers they are involved in a preliminary
negotiation/(though this is often implicit) and in the achievement and non-
achievement of desired help. In Episode 6 and Episode 9 these functions
are also present, though in the first their successful achievement is sub-
sequently denied. Episodes 10, 11 and 12 involve successful attempts
at the reconstitution of their self-awareness and of their visibility -
both dimensions of knowledge and of recognition. Episode 13 completes
the narrative by stating all three dimensions to be successfully achieved.
Joan and Harry are transformed (C2), they are recognised as heroes (C1)
and they are 'remarried'(C3). Indeed in the last sequence and in their
commitment to the future they establish a new contract with each other, a
commitment which simultaneously reaffirms the liquidation of the lack.

The ambiguities already noted in episodes 6 and 9 particularly with regard to the main test reappear here. The main test in which the principal lack is liquidated is only weakly expressed. It can be argued that for Episode 6 the contract and the job are presented as the most significant object of search, even though in Episode 9 it is replaced by a search for a relationship. The fact that the first fails and the second is successful does perhaps indicate the particular morality of the plot, that it is in human relations, not work, that the key to humanity is to be found, but at least for the time being this is beside the point.

This discussion, albeit schematic, does suggest a number of points. Firstly, beneath the manifest complexity of a plot such as that of Intimate Strangers it is possible to determine a relatively simple patterning of events and movements. Secondly that this patterning initially discussed in morphological terms, can be understood also in structural terms and that this identifies the narrative as a coherent and balanced system. Thirdly that this system is articulated through a series of relations which involve above all the alienation, of integration of, principally, the hero/es and his world. Fourthly that that articulation involves in the movement of the narrative through time, but also as we shall see, of its movement through space, a series of transformations. These transformations affect both the hero and through the hero, the meaning of the narrative as a whole. It is in the actions of the hero and, in this case, his helpers, opposers and the object of his desire, that this message is anthropromorphically generated. It is not the case, of course, that all meaning is generated from within the narrative. A great deal of the meaning of the story is dependent on the familiarity which its audience has with the culture within which it is being articulated and on which it depends. However, once that is accepted, then it is equally correct to

say that in the movement of the narrative itself, a movement specifically but not exclusively, dependent on its structural arrangement, meaning is created independently of that particular cultural context.

The final point is this. The narrative of Intimate Strangers, analysed as a whole, betrays very closely a structure which elsewhere is seen to be particular to the folktale. We are presented with an initial situation in which there is a rupture, in this case multiply expressed. The hero, firstly Harry, then later Joan, and implicitly both of them together undertake to seek for redemption. The form of their search depends on the particular nature of the lack. We have seen there are three dimensions, natural health , cultural health and social health.

The search itself is in three stages. An initial series of tests or encounters in which the hero looks for assistance, help or advice, is followed albeit weakly in this case, by a confrontation in which the redemption of the lack itself is the object of the encounter. These tests and there are two of them, the first unsuccessful, the second successful are followed by a series of further tests whose object is to confirm the achievements so far gained , and to do so in a way which establishes the hero's status. The series narrative ends with the materialisation of the results of their search. The lack is redeemed. Joan and Harry are reunited together with their family. They are, indeed, reintegrated into their society. Order is restored.

The only complexity at this level of analysis is the duplication which follows Harry's failure in Episode 6. That duplication also involves a change of hero. Joan then follows, though less intently and less fully, the narrative path which Harry has already defined. Her success in Episode 9 confirms his narratively subsidiary success during the preceding three episodes. From this point, the end of Episode 9, Harry and Joan act as joint heroes.

V

It will be worthwhile to examine in an inevitably more detailed way

the narrative of a single episode. Let me look at Episode 6.

A fuller summary of the plot of this episode follows:

Harry begins the day with a brandy and over breakfast rejects both
Joan's offer of fish pie for lunch and her joke about the alcohol on
his breath. He arrives at work to discover it idle, the workers sitting
on their machines. He is responsible. Harry runs to his office,
opens the mail and makes a call to a local school in the hope of
an order, only to find that Foster, his boss, is already there. He
opens a drawer, takes out a quarter of brandy and drinks from the
bottle.

Meanwhile Joan, busy with her housework, receives a telephone
call from an old friend of Harry's, Stephen Kenyon, who wants to
get in touch with Harry about some work. Kenyon had only just heard
of Harry's heart attack, a piece of information which makes Joan
suspicious.

Back at the works Foster intrudes and Harry is given both a talking
down and the threat of the sack if a large order is not produced
and produced quickly. By the evening Harry is both depressed and
drunk. He won't eat and lies to Joan about his previous week's
trip to London, a visit during which Joan believed he had met
Kenyon. Bedtime is an occasion for Joan to help Harry into his
pyjamas but also to check the truth of his story in the diary once
he is asleep. She realises Harry has been lying.

Next day, Saturday, Joan gardens while Harry and Kenyon meet in the
City. The deal is, in principle, agreed. Kenyon will come down to
Tunbridge Wells and see the work after the weekend. Harry, delighted,
but slightly the worse for wear, and having driven his Bentley into
Joan's wheelbarrow, arrives home to find daughter Kate in residence.
Kate's present of a bottle is eagerly accepted.

Sunday morning finds Joan finishing her gardening and leaving for
church. Kate and Harry, both involved in their work, discuss some aspects
of the printing industry, a discussion which leads to a row,
principally as Kate points out, over the fact that she earns
considerably more than her father. Joan's return and interruption
serves only to fan the flames. Kate stamps out of the house.

However, tempers cool and the following morning Kate and Harry
make up. His lunch with Kenyon and Foster goes well and the deal
is agreed. Later, in Harry's office they sign it. But while this
is going on an apprentice, Dale, plans and executes a practical joke;
he jams a potato up the exhaust of Harry's Bentley. The ensuing mild
explosion prompts Harry to run into the works, find Dale and attack
him. He is pulled off by Kenyon and Foster.

Joan returns that evening to find Harry alone in the dark. He tells her of the loss of his job and of the attack. They are led into an increasingly heated and desperate analysis of their past together, Harry's old and more recent 'affairs', and their lack of future. They both end up exhausted and defeated.

Early next morning Harry awakes to find Joan's bed empty. He quickly dresses and discovers her walking in the garden. She does not want to come in. They begin to discuss their past and to discover the possibility both of coming to terms with it and of being able to make positive decisions about their future. Harry wants to work for himself. They realise the enormity of the proposition and the implications - the selling of the house, the car, the discovery of who their friends really are. They test their ideas on Kate who is delighted.

Finally, after finding themselves separately in situations redolent of the past, Joan and Harry come together in the garden. They express their mutual fears and anxiety but they resolve to face the future together. Hand in hand they walk back to the house.

I have analysed this episode in terms of a modified and extended model of Metz's 'grande syntagmatique'[9] the significance of which, for present purposes, is two-fold. Firstly it produces a break-down of a continuous narrative in autonomous units of signification, autonomous that is with respect to the signifier (the form of the expression), to the specific medium through and in which the narrative is expressed. In what follows the numbered segments correspond to these units. Secondly, and more generally, the Metzian type of analysis centred as it is on a text's signifying process, allows us to recognise and acknowledge the relative complexity or simplicity of that construction. The number and nature of the autonomous segments recognised in this manner goes some way towards identifying a particular genre, or style of story-telling, a genre or style exclusively linked to the technique and technology of its telling.

This type of classification is important in two other related ways.
Juxtaposition of segments defined in terms of the signifier with
those defined in terms of the signified (more strictly in terms of
the form of the expression and the form of the content) allows us
to appreciate one element of the dynamic of the narrative - to
be understood in terms of the coincidence or non-coincidence of
the units of the two levels of analysis. And secondly such analysis
allows for a way of establishing the similarities and differences
between one aural/visual medium and another - say film and television -
as well as of establishing at the level of the signifier, differences
between one style of television making and another.

But, as I have already suggested, the principal concern of this
thesis is with the narrative rather than with the particularities
of the carrier of the narrative and so the autonomous segments
of the episodic televisualisation of Intimate Strangers are presented
without further discussion.[10]

Once again, also, the detailed analysis of the text, this time of
episode 6, is presented in Appendix 6 and 7. The first presents
the morphology, following Propp, and the second transforms that
into a structural arrangement. I will attempt a summary here.

To some small degree the opening sequence assumes some knowledge
of prior events, though the force with which Harry's early morning
drink is presented is sufficiently clearly the breaking of a

prohibition; the narrative, by virtue of it, is remarkably

self-contained. Joan is the first potential helper or denier of

help, and her failure to respond or provide what Harry seems to

want suggests the ongoing lack in their relationship.[11]

But Harry's basic preoccupation, and since he is still the

centre of attention, the narrative's main concern, is with his

work, and his actions away from home. On arrival he learns of

his failure to produce enough orders to keep production going

and of his boss, Foster's attempt to fill the breech. Foster is

a complex figure, morphologically. He appears to be both

dispatcher; he challenges Harry to get the orders, to fulfil

the task, but he is also a villain, in the sense that it is both

his potential disapproval and his apparent hold over the key

to Harry's cultural existence that he becomes someone to be

defeated. (2,4 and 5).

Joan too (6) comes close to villainy, and is so far as she

acts treacherously, then it seems that her involvement with

Harry increasingly signals a move from a potentially helping

relationship and therefore from tests of a qualifying nature, to

a potentially confrontational relationship and therefore to a main

test (see 19).

A good part of the narrative, (8-14) in which Harry and Kate
are involved, sparring with each other, and during which Joan
goes to church is, in terms of the movement of the narrative,
fairly neutral. The impression one gets is of a more or less
deliberate postponement of tension, after Kenyon and Harry
have agreed to follow up the deal, and before it is finally
agreed. Kate is clearly a potential helper, though at one remove
both from Harry's involvement with work, the first of his likely
main tests, and from his involvement with Joan, the second.
Her support which is finally gained (14, and in another context
21) is, as it were, of a limited nature. The 'magical agent',
the knowledge that Harry takes with him of her understanding of
his situation, is of narrative significance, chronologically,
but also of significance in articulating the fluctuations in
Harry's kinship relations.

The completion of the contract with Kenyon and Foster is, (15 and 17)
as we have already seen, of double significance functionally.
On the one hand the qualifying test, in which Kenyon is the
potential donor, is successfully completed. Harry gains the
contract which is the key to his success in establishing his
security at work. In the signing of the contract, then, Foster's
threat is averted. Foster's villainy is annulled.

Harry's involvement with Dale (16 and 18) is therefore functionally

clear. He stands to confirm or to lose by this supplementary test

all his previous gains. He loses them, and with that loss with

its accompanying denial of his heroic status, and his punishment

as a false-hero, he returns home.

In the context of the episode and the series, segment 19 has

multiple functional significance. An initial skirmish with Joan

which leaves them as far apart as ever is followed by a major

confrontation in which the lack in their relationship is finally

made absolutely clear. As a result both Harry and Joan, but

particularly Harry, ends defeated; the relationship is in tatters

(W-). Joan's function is complex, and to a degree, ambiguous.

Her involvement in this segment and previously, as potential helper
        in
and hence/the various qualifying tests which Harry undergoes, is

overlain by her villainy here, which in the context of their marriage,

is suggested by her failure as helper and her opposition to Harry's

actions. However, having said that, Harry's failure in the world

of work suggests that he too, could be construed, momentarily, as

the villain. The ambiguity is significant. It derives from each

of their separate failures. It is the ambiguity of exclusion.

In their failure they have found themselves outside the clearly

defined categories and roles assumed to be central for the effective

functioning of a marriage and they have found themselves, in their

darkened room, to be, momentarily, outside of society.

The dawn (20) brings with it a new narrative, or perhaps more strictly

a new move in the narrative. Harry finds Joan walking by herself

in the garden. Together they discuss the past and the future.

They agree to act, to effect a change in their circumstances, and

their plan is tested on Kate (21). The last two segments which

function most clearly as connectives, confirm that the past has
gone, and that with some anxiety, they are ready to face the future.

Once again implicit in this morphological analysis of episode 6,
is the way in which the narrative articulates rupture.   As it
happens,that rupture which is threatened in the opening segment
is maintained through Harry's subsequent failure.   We begin with a
lack and a threat, and we end with failure and that lack magnified.
What follows, in the last few segments of the episode, announces the
continuation of the plot.   Without them we might be excused for
seeing the plot as a tragedy, and that through no fault of his own
(fate the villain) Harry has failed to defend the surplus (job,
marriage, family, health) which in other stories might be the object
of search.   There is then, in this episode a certain negatively
expressed equilibrium.   We can recognize it more /follow the narrative
in terms suggested by A.J. Greimas (Appendix 7).

The central narrative, that is prior to the announcement of the new
move ,consists in a movement from rupture ($\bar{A}$) to rupture ($\bar{A}$). Harry's
drinking is symbolic of his denial of a contract with the world and
it is also a violation of a specific prohibition - not to drink.
The move ends with the reaffirmation of that rupture in which Harry
and Joan together deny their contract with each other and by
implication with society as a whole.   In a sense one can say that
they have suffered a social heart-attack.

Between these two points of the narrative, the search for recognition
(C_1), for power (C_2) and for the object of desire (C_3) is pursued
and each of the tests is associated with one or other of these
dimensions of search.   Harry's initial involvement with Joan looks
for help ($\bar{C}_2$), and its failure defines his lack of relationship ($\bar{C}_3$).

Subsequently, in what is a repetition of that test, Joan's actions

suggest all three of the ways in which Harry is deprived.   In her

duplicity about the diary, she is both seeking information, deceiving

Harry and threatening him.   It is manifestly their relationship

which is now the object of search in this episode, and henceforth

in the series as a whole.   It is the key to both Joan and Harry's

social and cultural, and even physical renewal.

The encounter with Kenyon and with Kate separately and together

involve Harry's search for the means to act, for power, and his

conflict with Foster is a conflict over goods.   Equally obviously

his thrashing of Dale, the glorifying test, deprives Harry of his

potential heroic status, and of recognition, both by himself and

by others, of his success.   And this situation is repeated with

Joan.   So at the end of this encounter we are faced with a hero

who has failed ($\bar{A}$), who is punished ($\bar{C}_3$), impotent ($\bar{C}_2$) unrecognized ($\bar{C}_1$)

and whose contract with society has been exploded ($\bar{A}$).   We are,

as it were,back at the beginning.

While, as I've already suggested, there would be no absolute

necessity for the narrative to continue at this point, it does so,

and it does so by establishing along the three dimensions of knowledge,

power and desire the three axes of the ensuing narration.   Harry and

Joan in their discussion in the garden affirm their own lacks;   they

attempt to discover something of the reality of their situation,

to understand one another and to establish thereby their ignorance

of each other.   Secondly they reveal the lack in their relationship

and in their relationship with society.   Finally, and as a consequence

of both of these moments they realise their own past impotence.

Nevertheless they decide to make a go of it (A_1) and as a preliminary

test their ideas on Kate.   The stage is set, as it were, for a whole

new movement of the narration.   Episodes 7 to 13 develop and

complete both this new movement and the narrative as a whole.

VI

I have suggested that the narrative of Intimate Strangers, both of

the series and of its episodes substantially follow a similar pattern

and that pattern is one which links these narratives with the folk

narratives previously discussed by Vladimir Propp, and to the model

of narrative in part derived from Propp and elucidated by A.J. Greimas.

This is significant, obviously, not just in these terms, but in so

far as it has been shown that these texts present a narrative which

is in substantial part like that of the folktale;   that beneath what

seems so contemporary and particular, lies a level of expression

which links that contemporaneity and particularity, the product of an

industrialized, literate culture, with the cultural products of past

societies, neither industrialized, nor so essentially literate.   If

there is something universal in the telling of stories, then the

albeit very limited data presented here, at least suggests that that

hypothesis remains plausible.   Indeed the chronological narratives of

Intimate Strangers, are clearly accessible.   The telling of these stories

depends on a temporal logic which is already familiar no less to us

than to the audience of the folktales of Russia or of France or of

pre-Columbian America. [12]

This suggested continuity is not however in any sense an identity.

The narrative of Intimate Strangers,as are the narratives of all

contemporary tales are particular, both in terms of the particularity

of our culture and society, but also in the sense that each text

itself is unique.   The analysis of Intimate Strangers has produced

enough evidence of its particularity for this statement to be obvious.

But before discussing some of these dimensions in terms of the problems and ambiguities that the analysis has raised, I want to say a brief word about the analysis in general, and above all about its static appearance.

It goes without saying that a Proppian methodology seems to obliterate what Roland Barthes[13] and, following him, Seymour Chapman[14] have called the risk of the narrative, and what I have called its uncertainty. The morphology is of a completed narrative and is dependent on its unity for without it no functional or morphological analysis would be possible. Claude Bremond[15] in discussing both Propp and Greimas is at pains to make this point clear, but Bremond, as I have already suggested, in his own way overcompensates for this absence, and produces a scheme for the analysis of narrative which deprives it of its unity and fails to recognize its closure. Narratives are both structured and therefore in a certain sense closed; they have a beginning and an end; but they are also open, in the sense that as the narrative progresses there are a number of possibilities, a number of choices available to the acting units.

Logically, at any one point in the narrative, for example say the result of a contest, there are four possibilities; that it will be successful, that it will fail, that its result will be complex and affect the different acting units, or actors, in different ways, or that it will be neutral, that final success or failure is withheld. The uncertainty of the narrative, its risk, consists in the uncertainty as to which of these possibilities will be the one taken. Given the number of such choices that both acting units, and hence producers and audience, have to make in a complex story, then there are obviously a great number of potential narrative variants. But however great a number of ways of telling a story there are, measured in terms of the

different paths the action can take, not only are they limited, but that limitation is reducable to a permutation of only four basic choices. This dynamic, of a strictly limited uncertainty, is implicit in the Proppian model, and hopefully, in my discussions so far. It does not take much to bring it to the surface. It certainly does not involve a rejection of the formalism which has been used to open up the narrative, whatever other reasons there might be for rejecting such an approach.[16] Narrative risk, I suggest, consists in this limited certainty or uncertainty and we can recognize it once we acknowledge that the outcomes of particular actions are neither pre-given, nor entirely free, but articulated through the codes of narrativity, a most significant one of which is that of its chronology.

However, there is a further point. The assumption that a narrative is, in its own terms, closed, and that within that closure there is a precise and to a large extent predictable chronology makes following a narrative itself a more not a less, involving task. Firstly because certain of its functions can be left implicit, and have to be available to the reader, or audience, if he wishes to make full sense of the chronolgy; and secondly some functions, in their interconnection, can be left incomplete, for example it often happens that the three moments of a test are split up - the hero and the potential donor meet, the test is undertaken, but the resolution of the test is delayed. Here, in morphological tersm, we can recognize the dynamic of the narrative, that is its delay and its significant absences. Neither would be available or explicable without the assumption of the sort of model as being central to the narrative as I have assumed and argued for here.

It remains, nevertheless, to outline what seem to be particularities
of the narrative of Intimate Strangers, an outline which perforce
leaves open the question of their significance and their typicality.

They begin with and may also subsequently stem from what I have
called the mode of the narrative. Mode is not a very precise term.
I want to be able to suggest that Intimate Strangers, for example,
stresses the passivity rather than the activity of its characters,
limits the extremes of action, dwells on the exchange of meanings
rather than of goods, is prepared to weaken the contrasts of black
and white and deal more often in various shades of grey. The notion
of genre, is too specific, and style too personal; mode identifies
in a very general way, the contextuality of a narrative, its
atmosphere, its orientation. Without wishing to labour the point,
it seems reasonable to suggest that the drama of Intimate Strangers
is one of understatement. In its understatement we are involved
more with the intricacies of social interaction and psychological
development, than with overt action either physical or mystical.
Now while it is the purpose of the argument that this is irrelevant
as far as the recognition of the morphology of the narrative is
concerned, it seems fair to suggest that it is the mode of the
narrative which has produced the absences, ambiguities and
difficulties associated with that morphology. I have noted a
number in my account thus far. Let me, briefly, bring them
together now.

Clearly in a narrative such as that of Intimate Strangers, in its
realism and in its close concern with the events of the everyday,
the function which in Proppian terms calls for the receipt of the
magical agent, has to be interpreted in metaphorical terms.
The heroes in this narrative, essentially Harry and Joan, both
separately and together gain help and support of an intangible

nature rather than a magical agent as such. Rarely is anything
handed over, except perhaps money (ep. 7 and implicitly in episode 12),
which is in any way directly effective in the pursuit of the main
object. But help is given and refused, advice is often offered.
This seems trivial and indeed it is, except that in so far as the
particular content of a function is important - if it is for example
consistent in identifying the coherence of a narrative and what I
have already loosely called its mode.

The narrative of Intimate Strangers has further dimensions which
reinforce its consistency. It may be remembered that the narrative
proper of the series begins with Harry's heart attack. It seems
at that point, that this event is entirely fortuitous, and so it is.
No villainy has been committed. Harry suffers passively, and it
is this passivity, and the absence of any overt villainy which sets
the pace for the rest of the narrative.

There are two points which arise from this; the first has to do with
the nature of the lack, and the second with the lack of a villain.

To deal with the question of lack first. There are in the series
three dominant lacks, each motivating one main thread in the narrative.
A lack, as we have seen, is assumed to be more subjectively felt and
initially a passive imposition, whereas villainy implies something
more objectively determinable and entirely imposed by an identifiable
agent. They are, obviously, in an asymmetrical relationship,
villainy will generate a lack, but a lack can exist without villainy.

In the series as a whole there are three interdependent lacks.
The first, and the catalyst, is the lack of natural health, as it is
primarily felt by Harry - his heart attack and its physical consequences.
But this is quickly forgotten. From episode 3, to episode 12, when

he goes for a check up, Harry's physical health, and hence this natural lack, is scarcely mentioned and is even narratively insignificant.

The second of the three lacks, that of work (lack of cultural health) which follows immediately from the first becomes much more central.   Harry loses his job, and his singular involvement as hero until episode 7 is oriented in terms of remedying that particular lack.   His solution, to open a shop with living quarters above is not without its significance as I hope to show in the next chapter.   Essentially however this lack is redeemed by episode 7.   Subsequently, though much more weakly, in episode 11, Joan also has to remedy her lack of employment.
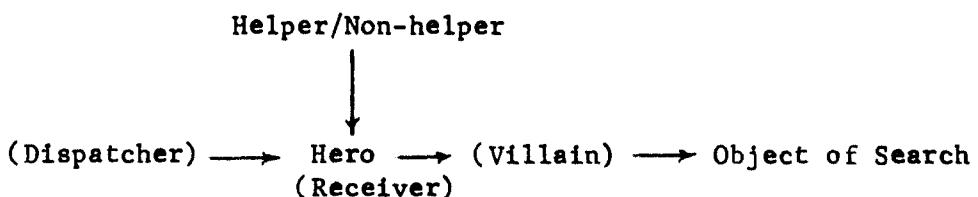
The third lack, which, albeit implicitly, precedes the heart attack, is the lack in Joan and Harry's relationship, in their marriage. This lack I have chosen to call social.   The lack in their relationship affects Joan and Harry differently and unevenly, but when it becomes the central narrative preoccupation, as it does for example at the end of episode 6, and from episode 9 onwards, it demands that they act, jointly, as heroes. Marriage itself becomes the object of search and they the seekers;   and this is different, obviously, from the more classic form in which the princess is the sought for object, with the hero a singular seeker.

Despite this complexity, however, there is no real problem in identifying a hero for each of the episodes and for the series as a whole.   But of the six acting units identified by Greimas in his reformulation of Propp's similarly oriented discussion only two, the hero and the helper/denier of help, are consistently present in Intimate Strangers.   The figure of dispatcher, which

Jonathan Culler[17] sees as of a different order of relevance, is occasionally visible, most particularly in episodes 8 and 9, when Harry dispatches Joan. The receiver (destinataire) does not appear in this series at all, and if Culler is correct no more is there a place for him in the Proppian classification. The hero fills this position. Indeed, and finally, the object of search is, as we have seen, only implicitly, and then not always, an acting unit.

If this is so then this 'folktale' is articulated by a hero and his potential helpers. Villainy is rarely personified. Dispatch is also rare. Hero and receiver are elided and the object of search is either a good or an idea, 'work' or marriage.

The actorial structure though relatively clear, seems to fall short of the full complement defined by Propp and Greimas as being central to the folktale[18]. As it stands the actorial model of the series narrative of Intimate Strangers could be expressed diagrammatically as follows:

Helper/Non-helper
|
↓
(Dispatcher) ——→ Hero ——→ (Villain) ——→ Object of Search
(Receiver)

The most significant absence is that of the villain.[19] Although occasionally appearing in the episodes (Foster 6) his appearance is not often unequivocal. More often what overt villainy there is is generated by other acting units; for example, Joan as potential helper in episode 6 commits villainy in her involvement with the diary, so does Harry as hero, in his attack on Dale and on Joan. In one

sense the narrative has refused to name the opposition; it has refused its own negativity. Evil as such has been dissipated; if it appears then it does so in a distant and unrecognizeable (unrecognized) form. The characters never face it. In a second sense, and more obviously the villain is internalised. He blends with the hero and the helper/opposer. Villainy and evil are either too distant or too close to be clearly conceived. Initially villainy, as I have already suggested, has the character of fate; subsequent villainy has the character of an inner struggle. In a psycho-social drama such as this the hero is a complex figure at war with himself, acting indeed as his own dispatcher.

To be able to say as much, and to recognize its obviousness, is perhaps a function of our ability to bring to a narrative like Intimate Strangers such a model as this. On the one hand the absences are significant; on the other the drama still lies in their presence. What might be suggested then is that in addition to seeing an absence, we are also able to recognize compression, and that part of the task of reading such a narrative as this lies in the ability and the necessity to prize the actorial layers apart.

There is further, though more complex, evidence of this compression in the role of seducer. Seduction is central to the narratives of episode 5, where Harry fails to consummate his involvement with Pat, in episode 8, where Lionel successfully and unambiguously seduces Joan, and in episode 12 where the public relations lady fails to seduce Harry. Joan's seduction is, as I have said, unambiguous. She is clearly the seduced, Lionel the seducer. But Harry's two involvements are more equivocal; he is both seducer and the object of the seduction, and likewise his female opposites.

It is tempting to treat the seducer as a separate category, as a separate acting unit, and to treat seduction as a unique act. But seduction is no more than a particular act; it is the content given to a test whose functional significance may be in terms of providing help/opposition, or the redemption of the lack itself. Those involved are the heroes, the helpers and the villains.

The presence of seduction in a narrative is noted more for its semantic than its syntactic effectiveness. While the seducer is subsumable under existing categories of acting units, and the act of seduction is of differing functional importance depending on its place in the narrative, seduction itself is never anything more than a powerful agent of transformation, never less than a serious threat to an existing relationship,[20] The implications of this will be discussed in the next chapter.

Therefore the consistency of the mode is further defined in terms of the relative weakness of the main test, a weakness which follows logically from the lack of explicit villain. Obviously, without a villain there can be no struggle with him. Other functions too seem absent: branding and pursuit above all. Both once again would seem to be more relevant to a narrative of explicit action, though branding can be seen to have some metaphorical visibility and perhaps in episode 9 Joan's lack of clothes and Harry's painting of her constitutes some form of marking which this function suggests. However this is probably stretching a point.

I am suggesting that these particular qualifications, which seem
to be consistent with each other, define a particular mode of
narration.   I am not suggesting that, by virtue of them, the
Proppian model for the analysis of narrative now becomes irrelevant.
On the contrary, it is by virtue of the formalist and structuralist
analysis so far undertaken that these observations have become
possible.

But there is clearly more to it than this.   The narrative of
Intimate Strangers seems to have much in common with the narratives
explored by Propp and formalistically reduced by him.   In so far
as that model is effective in defining the particularity of the
folktale, or more specifically of what he calls the fairy tale, and
in so far as that model or variations of it have been used to define
in an equivalent way the folktales of other cultures and other times,
then this analysis suggests that Intimate Strangers too, has much
of the folktale about it.

How much of course, is the leading question.   Each is the product
of an oral dimension of culture; but folktales as we come to know
them are imprinted by the literacy of those of who have come to
record them and of course such a series of plays as Intimate Strangers
is filtered through a still dominantly literate culture.   Clearly too
there are differences in the nature of performance and in the
manifest content.   But each is ephemeral, the product of the moment,
and their themes and, of course, their structure, are similar.

If the folktale is ephemeral by virtue of the lack of literacy of
those involved as creator and audience, the television drama is
ephemeral by virtue of the technology, and of the values of the culture
which presents it.[23] That ephemerality encourages variation and change,
but at the same time keeps these variations firmly in hand.   The folktale

and the dramatic narrative have to be instantly and unequivocally recognized as such. It is central to the argument of this chapter that that recognition is premised on the anticipation of an already familiar chronological structure.

We are concerned then with the repetitive but ephemeral communications, whose novelty is outweighed by and dependent on the familiar. There is then underlying the apparent freedom which is suggested by the enormous range of subjects and treatments of television dramas, of which of course, Intimate Strangers is only one example, a kind of necessity, and that necessity has both chronological and logical dimensions. It remains to discuss, in the following chapter, in what the logic of the narrative of Intimate Strangers consists.

Chapter 5. Footnotes and References

1. There have, of course, been studies of the structure of dramas –
   though not as far as I am aware, very many: see Philip Drummond.
   Structural and Narrative Constraints in 'The Sweeney'. <u>Screen
   Education</u>. Autumn 1976. No. 20. 15-37.; Peter Wollen. North by
   North West. A Morphological Analysis. <u>Film Form</u>. 1.1. Spring 1976.
   19-34.

2. Figures kindly provided by London Weekend Television.

3. The series <u>Intimate Strangers</u>, has been forgotten, and short of being
   able to test my analysis against a current text (which might be
   significant in its advantages), there seems no reason to apologise
   for the eccentricity of choosing it. Indeed the significance of the
   analysis is independent of the text which, in its ephemerality and
   its having been forgotten, becomes only typical. The test, in a
   sense, is whether what is offered here and in the next chapter is
   illuminating of other, very different series, or even different types
   of programme. I think it will be.

4. Claude Lévi-Strauss. <u>op. cit.</u>; Marcel Détienne, <u>The Gardens of Adonis</u>.
   Hassocks, Sussex. 1972; Edmund Leach, esp. <u>Genesis as Myth and Other
   Essays</u>. London. 1969; <u>idem</u>. Michelangelo's Genesis. <u>Times Literary
   Supplement</u>. March 18th. 1977. 311-3.

5. cf. Jean Pouillon. quoted in James A. Boon. <u>From Symbolism to
   Structuralism</u>. op. cit. 162.

6. Peter Caws, What is Structuralism? in E.N. Hayes and T. Hayes. (Eds.)
   <u>Claude Lévi-Strauss. The Anthropologist as Hero</u>. Cambridge, Mass. 1970.
   p. 214.

7. See above Chapter 4 and Appendix.

8. cf. Vladimir Propp. <u>op. cit</u>. esp. Chapter IX The Tale as a Whole.

9. see Appendix 1 and Chapter 2 above.

10. cf. my earlier paper. An Approach to the Structural Analysis of the
    Television Message. <u>op. cit</u>.

11. The mixture of symbols, those belonging strictly to the preparatory
    section and those belonging to the main narrative derives from two
    aspects of the narrative. Firstly the overlaps of the series and
    episodic structures: the former, in this first segment involves Joan
    and the continuation of her unsatisfactory relationship with Harry.
    This is mixed with the provision of information about work and about
    Harry's past (Kenyon) which acts as a catalyst for the episode's
    narrative.
    The second is the continuing reminder of the breaking of the
    prohibition (δ) not to drink. Increasingly this becomes symbolic
    of Harry's deterioration and failure.

12. cf. Vladimir Propp, <u>op. cit</u>.; Alan Dundes, <u>op. cit</u>.; Claude Lévi-
    Strauss, <u>op. cit</u>.

13. Roland Barthes, Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits.
    <u>op. cit</u>.

14. Seymour Chatman, Towards a Theory of Narrative. op. cit.

15. Claude Bremond, Logique du Récit. op. cit.

16. Besides the kind of arguments which Lévi-Strauss, for example, levels against formalism, i.e. that it destroys its object - arguments which are essentially methodological (and those of Barthes), there are those, more ideological perhaps, which complain of formalism's failure to relate a text to its context, and in particular to the determining structure of the economic. cf. Victor Erlich. op. cit. esp. Chapter IV Marxism and Formalism.

17. Jonathan Culler, Structuralist Poetics. op. cit. 233-4

18. cf. Chapter 4 above.

19. cf. Philip Drummond, op. cit. p. 24 with regard to The Sweeney, "..villainy is rendered amorphous, abstract, perhaps anonymous, unlike the law, villainy creates no 'character'."

20. cf. A.J. Greimas and Francois Rastier, The Interaction of Semiotic Constraints. op. cit.

21. See T.C. Worsley, Television: The Ephemeral Art. London. 1970.

CHAPTER 6

Intimate Strangers: - A Structure

The statement of the empirically obvious can only be justified if the

explanation of why things should be so close to what they seem is

itself both unexpected and persuasive.   This chapter is an exploration

of much that is obvious or at least manifest in the texts of the series

Intimate Strangers. It is obvious because we, as members of the culture

to which the programmes are directed, recognize both consciously and

unconsciously their content and the significance of that content.   We

understand its meanings; we speak its language.

My aim is to explore the conditions upon which that understanding

is based and to do so in a way that puts flesh on the skeleton of the

narrative chronology already outlined in the previous chapter.   To mix

metaphors, my concern is with the meat of the narrative sandwich, one

layer of which is the formal structure of interdependent functional units

and the other the pregiven content of the text, the images and meanings

which are the common property of our everyday world.   The meat of this

sandwich lies in the fusion of these two layers. [1]

I wish to suggest that the way these meanings and images are

incorporated into the television text and the way in which they fill

out the narrative of such   a text is open to the same kind of

analysis of, and that the texts are remarkably close in their composition

to, the stories, the myths and the folktales of preliterate cultures.

I wish to continue to argue and to illustrate the thesis that at a

formal level these television programmes maintain a way of narration

that would seem in other circumstances the particular product of oral

cultures.

The significance of this, is twofold.   Firstly as I have already suggested it raises questions about the place of television in what is otherwise a predominantly literate culture, for example on ways of perception, and secondly it suggests that it would be possible to argue for continuity in culture;   an argument that would itself raise questions both about the uniqueness of contemporary civilisation and about the intensity and nature of its change, but also about the relative coherence or incoherence of our culture and our participation in it.   Finally such a suggestion might well incline us to find what others have called the power of television as much in this consistency and continuity of expression, as in its technology, [2] and as much if not more in the cultural centrality of its messages than in its ideological manipulation. [3]   These issues will be fully discussed in the final chapter.

Structuralists have often noted the incestuous relationship their activity has with the obvious. [4]   The splendour of Claude Lévi-Strauss's analysis of South American myth is in significant part a result of our unfamiliarity with the entire corpus which he takes as his object; the very occasional banality of some of Edward Leach's analyses are equally the result of our familiarity with the Biblical stories to which he addresses himself. [5]   The question that structuralism asks is much more the how, rather than the what or the why;   the what is largely assumed and the why is largely unanswerable.   The how is the result of what Roland Barthes calls the structuralist activity [6] and the how is never entirely surprising.   Marcel Détienne completes his analysis of the Adonis myths of Ancient Greece with the following observation:

"... the paradoxical situation is that, in Greece, in this
particular sector, the structural analysis applied from the
outside turns out to be in agreement with the analysis which
the Greeks who were contemporary with these myths elaborated
from within. Neither Theophrastus or Philichorus of Athens,
any more than Hesiod, would have felt themselves on unfamiliar
ground confronted with an interpretation in which our only
innovation has been to coordinate that decoding which the
Greeks themselves had already initiated in the works that were
parallel and, in many cases, complementary to most of the
myths themselves." 7

The dangers of the project are then clear: the path runs between
the banal and the ridiculous, and when the concern is with the culture
of our own time and place, to which we all in a certain sense have
privileged access, that path is particularly stony. The distance
which separates Lévi-Strauss from his primitives, a necessary distance
in the search for clarity and objectivity, protects his results. It
is in the nature of things that he is an anthropologist and then a
structuralist. When the object is contemporary culture and the
'primitives' are ourselves, the reverse is true, the method, structuralism,
creates the distance and in its use we become anthropologists. But as
a result of this methodological and not ontological distance the analyses
lose their protection; they become naked and they become vulnerable.
It is for this reason, perhaps, rather than the presence or distortion
of history, which is at the root of Lévi-Strauss's dismissal of the
possibility of the structural analysis of the contemporary culture.

But to dismiss out of hand the possibility of asking the same questions
of contemporary culture as of preliterate culture is clearly nonsensical. 8
The problems are the same, indeed the answers may well be similar. We
can recognise the specific character of the present without annihilating
its relationship to the past.

However, the difficulties of doing this are clear. When the mirror is
held too close, the image is distorted. And this over proximity is
not confined to the text, but extends quite obviously to that which
supports the text, to the cultural and social context.

The need for ethnographic support for the hypotheses suggested by
structuralist analysis, though provisional, has often been noted.[9]
Much of Lévi-Strauss's work consists in the cross referencing of what
he has understood from the myths with what he knows from the
ethnography of the tribes whose myths they are. Such reference allows
him to argue for a very subtle interrelationship of myth and social
structure, and for the suggestion that myth is in significant degree
autonomous, its text sometimes reflecting, sometimes transposing what
is known to be the case, say for example of the kinship structures
of its host society.[10] The ethnography upon which such a discussion
is based is assumed to be unproblematical; but it is not and it is also
certainly limited. And it is the paradox of this which makes some
of its more astute critics realise that much of Lévi-Strauss's own
deductions about the nature of myth are themselves particularly
limited.

In the analysis of contemporary society, however, what we know about
it is both problematic and unlimited; the uncertainty at the heart
of sociological understanding is well documented.[11] We are faced
both with the enormous complexity of contemporary society, a
complexity which makes any generalisation about it almost impossible,
but also with the squabbles in epistemology and methodology which
makes even the most hesitant assertion of knowledge subject to ridicule.
There is little or no ethnography of our own society against which
our text can be unambiguously placed, and as a result the analysis
which follows, at least until supported by many more of a similar
order, must be treated as very largely provisional and partial.

Without a drastic change of perspective the television programmes
with which we are presently concerned will tell us nothing we do not
already know; we will be blinded by and to the obvious. The

transcendance of these limits involves a change of perspective and
a demand that we treat them as the products of an alien culture,
that we become anthropologists, and that our texts become
anthropologically strange to us.[12]   Of course, this procedure
begs as many questions as it answers, not the least that it is in
any complete sense impossible, and secondly that it assumes what
it is the purpose of the analysis in this case, to assert - that
our society and culture have preserved something significant from
previous societies and cultures and that that something is available
to structuralist analysis.   But it also, given the lack of an
ambiguous ethnography of our own society, forces us to draw on the
tacit knowledge that we as members of that society do indeed have;
we are all our own ethnographers therefore precisely because we are
members.[13]   Statements about work, or about fashion or about the
relations between the sexes which bulk large in the following account
have this uncertain and vexatious status, in part derived from a
situation of membership and familiarity and in part from a methodological
procedure which demands distance and unfamiliarity.   The proof of
this particular pudding lies very much in the eating.

How then to proceed?   I have established in the last chapter that the
narrative presented in the programmes Intimate Strangers follows a
pattern, and that pattern, in its morphology has much in common with
the folktale, not least in its redundance and in its simplicity.
In following the logic of action, of loss, redemption and of test,
what I hoped to have achieved was a description of the framework
of the narrative.   This is the track on which the individual story
with its characters and particularities of action and of meaning
runs.   Although dependent on our understanding of these meanings,
that analysis did not explore or explicate them.   In so far as it
is possible to do just that, then this is the present task.

The model of the narrative in chapter 5 suggests that we visualise

two levels of narrative transformation, that of the morphology

(chronologic) and that of its logic. Strictly speaking this logic

is not a logic of the tale as such but of the system of which that

tale is but an element, and even more a logic of the cultural context

within which the system of tales is embedded. This latter logic

precedes its incorporation into the tale. The former logic, that of

the tales system, functions, as it were, to translate the general logic

and cultural codes into those more specifically useful for the narrative.

The process involves a selection, a simplification perhaps, but it is

the process basic to the generation of meaning within a tale and

within a system of tales. A.J. Greimas is attempting a similar

distinction, that between grammatical properties and narrative

properties, and that between context analysis and the narrative model,

and he makes the point in this way:

> "The context is presented in the form of 'content - fillings',
> independent of the narrative itself and taken up a posteriori
> by the narrative model. But at the same time, these content
> - fillings are already constituted contents; just as a novelist
> in the unfolding of his story gradually develops his characters
> from a name chosen at random, the process of myth-making creates
> actors which it provides with conceptual contents. And it is
> this diffuse knowledge of the contents shared by the Bororo but
> not by the analyst that constitues the code which must be
> broken." [14]

The proposal is then an exploration of the codes which in their

application and combination generate the meaning of a particular

text, its message. Whether this is, in the strict sense a semantic

operation has been questioned. [15] The fact that the analysis is

itself coded, and like the tales themselves, context dependent,

would suggest that the operation is something less than a generative

and rather more an interpretive procedure. Be that as it may, the

messages are coded, and while we may argue about the meaning of the

text (indeed it is the nature of the text that we will so argue) we

will not dispute that these meanings are the product of discoverable

rules. The task is to identify, then, the levels of content through which the text is articulated and to define the units, A.J. Greimas would call them lexemes, which act as formal points for this articulation.[16]

II

We need to be clear about a number of basic terms, some of which have already been used. The chronologic defines the level of story telling which is more or less fixed; it identifies the unity of a particular narrative in terms of its morphology and its functioning. The code, any number of which may be at work within a text, can be defined in terms of a specific and consistent level of the text's articulation, for example the alimentary code, the cosmological code, the techno-economic code and so on. The content fillings refer to those meanings available in the context of the presenting culture and which are used by the text and its system; it is through the particular context that the codes of narrative find their representation. The message refers to the series of manifest meanings derivable from a particular text; in principle endless, as many contemporary critics in their notion of 'reading' point out, nevertheless in practice quite limited as the same critics in their notion of 'symptomatic reading' acknowledge.[17] The message of a text is always problematical, and not the exclusive property of the text itself; what is encoded must be decoded, and each individual receiver will do this, of course, in the last resort in an unique way.[18] Each will derive a different message from the one text. The obviousness of this assertion does not belie the equally obvious but opposite assertion that the substantial agreement or coherence which surrounds the message of a text is the product, significantly, of the coherence of the text itself, and the logic of its construction.

More seriously problematical for the kind of textual analysis

proposed and undertaken here is that of the definition of its basic

or minimal unit.   The range of terms and definitions available for the

principle units in narrative analysis is legion.   From Vladimir Propp's

functions [19]   the net is cast to include 'narreme', 'event', [20]

'eidon' [21] , 'videme/cademe' [22] , 'lexeme' [23] and 'function and

indices' [24] .   The first and last in this list, those of Vladimir

Propp and Roland Barthes have both been criticized by B.M. Colby and

Gerald Prince (who have suggested their own terms), for the lack of

rigour in their definition of minimal units, a lack of rigour which

each of the two latter authors attempts to rectify by specifying the

precise rules of the transformation and interrelation of the units

they specify.   For example, B.N. Colby writes:

> "The main difference between the function and the eidon
> is that the eidon is defined in terms of higher order
> categories and sequence rules.   The function is defined
> only as a specified narrative action." [25]

The significance of such higher order categories and sequence rules

lies in Propp's failure, Colby believes, to recognise variations in

plot structure other than in terms of 'deviance' from the basic

pattern. [26]   Such arguments have already been the object of much

consideration (chapter 4) and no further comment is warranted here.

Suffice it to say that attempts to move the study of narrative

towards a transformational system similar to that of Chomsky's

analysis of language, whether inductively (Colby), or deductively

(Prince) seems to lead either to an over formalisation sufficiently

removed from a vital narrative to make anything other than a minimal

sense of it, or to a still basic classification of manifest units

in which the postulated rules are limited to the identification

of the unit's connection and exclusion, but which fails to allow

any theorisation either about the specifically analysed text or about

narrative in general.

Natural language and narratives are sufficiently different, as I

have already pointed out, for the attempt to make procedures perhaps

suitable for the one suitable for the other, of limited relevance.

However, the failure to search for greater rigour in the analysis

of narrative is one equally to be avoided.   Propp's identification

of the functional units at the base of the narrative, marks an

important principle of linguistic analysis, that of commutation. [27]

If the replacement or transposition of one unit by another   would

lead to an alteration or destruction of the sense of the chronology

of the narrative, then that unit manifested in action or in event,

becomes both significant and basic for the understanding of the

narrative as a whole.   With this in mind, one can distinguish between,

as Roland Barthes and B.N. Colby do, for example, between primary

and secondary units, those whose significance is fundamental and

whose absence would destroy the narrative as such, and those whose

presence adds richness to the narrative as long as they appear in

an appropriate place. [28]   In this sense the minimal unit of the

narrative which Propp identifies as a functional unit and which I

have also called the sequence is not the smallest unit of the narrative.

As the discussion in this chapter will presently reveal, the sequence

of the chronology when transposed into the segment of the logic,

while it remains the same unit, is immediately vulnerable to the

disintegration of multiple coding in which even the flicker of an eye

can have significance.   But just as in the form of the expression

band of the television text [29]   the shot was seen as the minimal

unit, so too now, it is the segment.   In neither case does this

minimum preclude further and more precise analysis.   Far from it,

what it does preclude, however, is the locking of that analysis on

to the manifest structuring of the text.   Beneath the shot, and

beneath the sequence/segment of the context of a narrated text,

the number of interpretable units is endless.

The basic unit of the narrative text is therefore the functional

unit identified in principle by Propp.   I have distinguished the

two modes, as it were - the sequence,the unit of action, significant

diachronically, and the segment, the same unit of action significant

synchronically.   In each mode this unit is subject to further

investigation and dissection.   Any subsequent units of the text

will be both dependent on, and contributory to, the sequence/segment,

and will in any case be code specific.

A number of further points arise.   The number of codes at work

within a text will be great; [30]   some of them will be of greater

apparent significance than others.   They will be consistently more

visible.   Thus, for example, in his analysis of La Geste d'Asdiwal,

Lévi-Strauss identifies the geographical, the techno-economic, the

cosmic and the social as the dominant codes through which the narrative

is structured [31] whereas, in the Mythologiques,   the alimentary

and the acoustic codes are also subject of some considerable discussion. [32]

Similarly, in A.J. Greimas' analysis of the primary Bororo myth it

is the alimentary code (isotopy) which is judged to be more significant

than the natural code (isotopy). [33]   In identifying a particular code,

and in adjudging its relative significance for the narrative - both of

which are empirical operations - the aim is to define a consistent

thread of meaning.   If a particular story is located somewhere

specifically, and if the characters move from one location to another,

the nature of their movements, the point of origin, of transition and

of return is significant.   So too, at another level, are the clothes

they wear, or the colour of their hair.   In this sense nothing in

the narrative is irrelevant and relatively nothing is uncoded.   The

demand for the inclusion of everything in the story, and especially a

myth, simultaneously with the demand for the identification of a

privileged or rock-bottom level of coding is theoretically apposite

though empirically impossible. [34]   It is theoretically apposite

because without such a demand anything less becomes, rather than

provisional, arbitrary and insubstantial;   but it is impossible because

not only can a text never be exhausted but also because the attempt

to exhaust it will deny it its truth. [35]

In the analysis of any text, and these television programmes are no

exception, the identification of its codes and of their articulation,

is therefore,in the Weberian sense,partial and provisional.   One

can, however, suggest that there are those, the geographical, the

techno-economic, the social and the physical (biological),

which are of greater significance than others (for example the alimentary,

the acoustic, the fashion, the nominal, the colour etc.)   The

distinction,which of course will vary from text to text, significantly

derives not just from the text itself but from our (my) perception

of the most important dimensions of the structure of human activity

as a whole;   location, production, social relations and physical

survival, respectively.

How these codes manifest themselves in any given text will of course

be specific to each text.   One television programme, for example,

can be located in the city where the principal movements of its main

characters are from the office to the street;   another, say Intimate

Strangers, involves principal movements from home to city.   Beneath

these manifest differences one can distinguish, apart from their

joint involvement with place, a distinction between a place of

domestic security and relative inactivity, and one of alien insecurity

and action.   One can even suggest that beneath these differences

lies a simple but fundamental dichotomy of proximity and distance.

Working back from this dichotomy one can establish how its various

manifestations are presented in different texts; how each generates

its own particular message from the different codes at work within it.

The binary distinctions with which the following account, along with

others, is studded, have therefore a powerful heuristic significance.

No claims are made for their privileged reflection of a basic mode of

human thought, but a claim is made for their ability, even as a priori

categories, to open up a text. As G.S. Kirk notes, some of the binary

categories with which Lévi-Strauss adorns his analysis have as much

to do with the actual practice of living and of the experience of life

of the Indians with whose myths he is concerned as with any fundamental

thought process. The distinction between high and low, and near and

far, is empirically significant and narratively important; it may

only incidentally be of ontological significance. [36]

It is however, the case that with binary distinctions a little goes

a long way; the distinction between nature and culture in the techno-

economic code, [37]   between life and death in the physical code,

between here and there in the geographical code and between man and

woman in the social code identify not just a basic logical, opposition

but a logical opposition of consistent cultural importance. Much

of the account which follows derives from an awareness of this and

many of the arguments which seem to transcend the specificity of the

detailed analysis are premised on the assumption of the potentially

universal significance of such basic categorial pairings.

The relationship between code and message is significantly mediated

in the person and the activities of the characters who appear in the

narrative. The process which A.J. Greimas calls anthropomorphisation

involves the quickening of the abstract categories through the actions

of the narrated. [38]   The acting units become, then, the carriers of

the action but also the focal points of the narrative's symbolic significance. As we have seen in an action of functional significance the narrative is moved forwards; and as we will see it is in the same action that a conceptual transformation occurs. In myth it is in the transformation of say jaguar into frog which is significant in the opposition of jaguar and frog; similarly in contemporary drama it is in the opposition of husband and wife, the murder of a villain by a cop, or even the change in the status of a hero to a villain, which is as much of conceptual as of narrative significance.

Much of the significance is generated by the context in which an action takes place, though not all. Central, for example, to Kenneth Burke's understanding and definition of dramatism is the pentad of act, scene, agency, purpose and agent. [39] The notion of context here is therefore of some breadth. While the act, in Burke's terminology, provides the narrative with its movement, the agent (including presumably those passively involved in the action) is the centre of the narrative's meaning. It is not just a question of being able to list the basic acting units, present in the narrative, as for example Propp and Greimas and Barthes have already done, but actually being able to explore the narratively specific qualities attached to the acting units at any one time. What are their qualities? Are they male, female, old or young, black or white, good or bad and so on? And the same questions apply to the context of the action (Burke's scene strictly). What is the nature of the location? How and why does the significance of an identical act, say work or murder, change as the location of that action, say the home or the office, also changes? Part of an answer to such questions, which juxtaposes agent, act and scene, depends on a series of assumptions which any analysis must make about, among other things, what is

appropriate.   A measure of the narrative's equilibrium (or

disequilibrium) can be found in the appropriateness of agent, act

and scene, and of their interrelationship. [40]   For example as

we shall se, in Intimate Strangers it is immediately established

that the garden is Joan's place; her activity in it, gardening, is

natural for her and by and large narratively neutral, not so however

Harry's. His occasional ventures into the garden either reinforce

the loss of his masculinity (i.e. his loss of job) or signal, in

anticipation, that loss.   The garden, and gardening are not 5r him.

Recognition of the how and why of this narrative appropriateness

which is an appropriateness of the static category rather than the

dynamic function, is an essential part of being able to read a narrative.

Indeed there are those narratives, and television narratives in

particular, which depend very significantly on their congruence and

which, as a result present texts, albeit often quite complex, of

remarkable consistency.   This pressure towards verisimilitude gives

the televison text its overdetermined character; its processes

of signification are clear, as code upon code speak the same message.

As a result little of the televisual text is ambiguous.   A television

play is not like a poem.   It is not built on ambiguity.   Its tropes,

the flashback, flashforward, slow-mix have nothing of the complexity of

the contradictory and half-expressed meanings in which Sir William Empson

so glories. [41]   The television text is in C major, and although such

a characterisation may be being exaggerated by an analysis which is in

the same key, it is unlikely that the latter will deny us the

possibility of recognising what little ambiguity there is within the

former.   The solidity of action, the visibility of space, will

always limit the subtleties of character, the ambiguities of role and

the hesitancies of motivation.   Indeed motivation itself is a functional

category, the product of reaction rather than action, definition

rather than speculation.[42] It is a truism that television,
precisely in its combination of sound and picture, leaves little
to the imagination. Radio has a much greater facility here.[43]
In this sense, the television text is closed in a way more complete
than any other, even that of the cinema, for the latter, in our
culture at least, has been able to transcend the restrictions of
narrative and has produced texts subversive of the degree zero
writing, still, and perhaps always, the particular privilege of
television.[44]

The assumptions upon which the following analysis is based should by
now be reasonably clear. Methodologically what will be presented
is something rather less than a grammar, rather more than an
interpretation. The problems of producing a grammar of narrative
in the manner of a transformational grammar of natural language
have already been discussed. The problems of presenting an
interpretation under the guise of objectivity are equally obvious.
As Umberto Eco[45] points out, even A.J. Greimas' analysis of the
Bernanos texts, disciplined and formalised though it is, is only
one possible way of approaching them. There is no certain privilege
in such analysis, and as Eco again is at pains to point out, semiosis
is endless and anything which freezes a single system at a certain
(arbitrary) point suffers inevitably as the result.[46]

The way of the work which follows has its origins in the analysis
of mythical stories undertaken by Claude Lévi-Strauss, and A.J. Greimas.
In it I will be concerned to understand the television programmes
in terms of what I take to be their structural arrangement and
semantic construction. The categories which have proved so fruitful
in the analysis of myth are, as it were, tested. The programmes
seem to be, and I hope to show that this is the case, accessible to

the same kind of analysis as that undertaken by the two senior
structuralists.   That they are so seems, to me, significant.
But that significance is not all inclusive;   it is for example
perfectly clear that the story of Harry has, albeit in its entirely
mundane way, something of the Christ myth about it.   It is a story
of his (near) death and resurrection;   of the construction of a new
life and the treading of the steady path towards a   utopia.   There
is equally, and perhaps more immediately relevant, something of the
culture hero in Harry.   Deprived of social and cultural support
in his loss of job and the disaster of his marriage, he constructs a
world in which he becomes, in common parlance, the self-made man,
and a contented active husband.

These are the themes, and there will be others, which can be found
in this text.   Each could provide the initial impetus for a fully
fledged and entirely consistent interpretation of the meaning or
message of the text.[47]   Each is a selection and each in a certain
sense freezes the text in a particular way.   There are no ultimately
compelling arguments for excluding the ways offered by these inter-
pretations in favour of the one I am suggesting, except perhaps this
one.   What is being offered here grows out of a recognition that a
narrative text is a construction, that it is systemic, that it is
ordered, and that it is in its system and its order, that its sense
is created.   That to define and understand a system means to specify
its rules, and to suggest in what way these rules are relevant to and
provide the key to the understanding of an entire, specified, range
of texts.   To talk of rules is probably a little premature;   to
talk of patterned constraints might be more apposite.   But whatever
one wishes to call them, the exercise, and the justification for the
exercise, is clear.   If the tales told by the 'primitive' and by
those in technically more advanced but still oral cultures can be

reduced and understood through a certain way of coding, can our own tales similarly be reduced and understood? [48] If the answers provided by the analysis throw some light not just on the questions associated with narrative as a whole but also on the relationship between one particular culture and its narratives, then it would seem to me, the approach is worthy of consideration.

III

The predominant concern will be with the narrative of the series as a whole. The chronological, morphological, structure of the series narrative is in many ways a complex one, especially when compared with the simple narratives which have been listed as subjects of previous analyses. Instead of one lack, there are three; instead of a simple one move tale; there is a tale with two moves; instead of one hero, it could be argued that there are in fact three heroes in Intimate Strangers; Harry Paynter most obviously, Joan Paynter, and then Joan and Harry together.

At the manifest level therefore we are faced with a series of television programmes involving a number of characters whose names we know and whose attributes we quickly learn. We watch one of them, Harry, have a heart attack. We recognise that his illness (lack of health) directly produces the loss of his job, (lack of work) and exacerbates his shaky marriage (lack of relationship). We watch one episode after another[(2 - 6)] in which Harry's attempts to redeem the situation, in particular the lack in his relationship and the lack of work, fail. We see his despair in failure (especially 6) and we follow his new attempts, successful this time, to find work. Meanwhile Joan is struggling; she feels the lack in her relationship and lives it (especially 7 and 8); she too, albeit reluctantly, finds work and even comes to terms with her own physical lack (the reference to her

menopause in chapter 9). Then, their individual lacks significantly resolved, Joan and Harry act together to affirm their relationship; and as it were, they act to reverse the movement of the initial causal chain; the successful redemption of their marriage generates an atmosphere in which they both find security in work, and almost incidentally, Harry is declared fit and well (episode 12).

How is this, I think relatively uncontentious reading articulated; what are its elements, what is its message? We can provide some substance to these questions by exploring the manifest level, the content, of the programmes a little more fully. The simplest way to proceed will be to treat each lack with the narrative thread that it engenders separately.

The Physical Lack

Harry's heart attack is the deus ex machina of the narrative as a whole. Although preceded by the events of the first episode, everything which follows is dependent on it, even though it subsequently becomes displaced as the central concern of the narrative. Harry's lack of work and lack in marriage quickly assume dominance. Episode 2 immediately following his attack and episode 3, in which he and Joan go on holiday together, centre in part on Harry's recovery; his passive convalescence in the garden, his active recuperation in the Lake District. Little more is heard of his illness until episode 9 when Joan and their doctor discuss it in the context of her own symptoms, until finally he is cleared, after his mother's death in episode 13.

Still at the manifest level it is possible to make a number of observations about the context in which Harry's near death and subsequent recovery is treated by the narrative. The location of the main events is important. His heart attack occurs, after a hectic few hours at work in the city, at the railway station. He is about to go on holiday. The railway station is a point of transition. Like airports, motorways, derelict buildings and so on, they have a marginal significance in contemporary culture. Things happen there, especially in our narratives, which do not happen in the relative security of home and hearth. How often do we see murders committed and villains getting their come-uppance in these marginal locations? Harry's heart attack occurs at a natural site for a cultural death.

His natural recovery, especially in so far as it takes place in the two subsequent episodes occurs in what is, for us in our culture, the most appropriate location: close to nature. First of all in his garden at home and then on holiday walking in the Lake District, Harry recovers sufficiently for his physical health to no longer become a preoccupation of the narrative. To all intents and purposes it is by virtue of his contact with things natural, albeit mediated in the environment of home and hotel, which effects the cure.

The search for health, then, involves Harry in little that is narratively complex. He moves away from his customary areas of involvement, above all his work, and his journeying is extended to a place where he had not been since before his marriage. The Lake District awakens many memories of the past, for him and for Joan, and it is, in a sense, of symbolic significance that these figures: Ruskin, Donald Campbell, Joan's dead brother Peter, and the vital but anachronistic figures of Hector Lanson and his wife, as well as Hitler and Christ, surround him in his period of recovery. Each of

them are marginal figures; all except Lanson are dead, only memories;
- even Lanson's son has disappeared. Figures from the past therefore
are used, as it were, as helpers in the search for health. More
direct help, in this search, are the doctors.

There are a number of doctors, the specialised agents of physical
recovery of our society, present in the narrative. Harry has his
own doctor; white, respectable, late middle-aged, who is centrally
concerned with the heart attack. But doctors appear at three other
points in the narrative. Firstly (episode 9) when Joan goes to see
Maurice, Harry's doctor, about her depression and unhappiness, and
finds herself face to face with Jennie Bowers, white, smart, middle-aged
and postively female. She provides an instant and natural cure for
Joan, uncomplicated by the prescription of medicines. Then there
is the unnamed young doctor who refuses to carry out the abortion
which Joan and Harry's daughter Judith wants because she has become
pregnant without the consent of her husband. Finally there is the
doctor who attends Harry's dying mother. Young and black and very
proper. He is unable to do anything to help. The doctors in
Intimate Strangers, are examples of an important group of figures of
mediation and help in our culture and can be classified in the
following way:-

Table 1

	Doctors (Physical Lack)			
	White/Black	Young/old	Male/Female	Cure/No Cure
Pratt (1.2.13)	+	-	+	+
Bowers (9)	+	±	-	+
Abortionist (10)	+	+	+	-
Mother's Doctor (13)	-	+	+	-

(where + signifies the first and - the second element of the opposition,
± signifies a middle position and +/- signifies both).

The point of presenting such a table at this stage of the discussion
is simply to illustrate, albeit very superficially, that this particular
group of characters, like any other, are constructions. Their
deconstruction in this manner, reveals how and from what, each doctor
in this case, is constructed. Each opposition defines one aspect
of a particular code, that of colour or race, age, sex and effectiveness
from which a mutually exclusive choice can be made. To explore the
structure of a message, then, rather than its content, would involve a
consideration of the range of significance of each of these codes.
Emphasis is switched from the integrity of a character to the coded
elements which make it up. It would be difficult however, to take
such an analysis much further without the consideration of a greater
range of texts. One might be tempted to suggest from this that
female doctors do not need any medication - mediation to cure their
own; and that the black doctor is an appropriate agent (angel) of
death. But this is in a sense too speculative and intuitive. A
study of the imagery of the medical practitioner in television dramas
would nevertheless tell us a great deal about our culture's perceptions
of these significant figures.

The Social Lack

The lack that quickly becomes visible in Joan and Harry's relationship
antecedes but is seriously exacerbated by his heart attack. Their
search now separately, now together, is consistently visible in the
narrative, and by virtue of the three agents (one acting unit) who
are involved, it is quite a complicated task to follow it.

We can begin by considering the events in their sequence. Much of
the dynamics of their relationship is centred, quite naturally, at
home and the full significance of the domestic geographical code will
be discussed below.

The series opens with Joan strolling in the garden while Harry finishes his toilet in the upstairs bedroom. Harry looks down at her; she does not notice him. This picture is reversed at the end of the episode 2 after Harry's loss of job and a major row with Joan. Then he is in the garden and she is at the upstairs window. When he comes to look up towards her, she has moved away. In the meantime their togetherness and their distance has been played out in the kitchen at breakfast time and in the other rooms of the house, their sitting room, their dining room and their bedroom. The latter is the setting for significant nonactivity.

The resolution of the initial conflicts in the first episode, which centre on their coming holiday, stems from activity outside the home however. Kate, their daughter, provides help as a result of a drink with Harry at a pub; and Joan herself is won over at the golf-club dance. But the negative intrusions into the marriage also come from outside; the loss of the holiday cottage is announced at the city pub by Harry's solicitor, the heart attack occurs at the station, Harry loses his job in the city. Home is clearly an island of potential security more or less passively subject to the shocks of disaster and repeal which the outside world seems to generate.

This pattern of the playing out at home of the conflicts generated and the solutions granted abroad is one that continues throughout the series. The most directly serious threats are those of seduction; and each time a seduction appears possible (episode 5, 8 and 12), Harry or Joan must travel to the city. Equally the attempts at cure prior to episode 7 involve, just as in the case of Harry's physical health, a movement away from the strict boundary of the house, to the Lake District holiday (episode 3), and to the garden and to early morning, (episode 6).
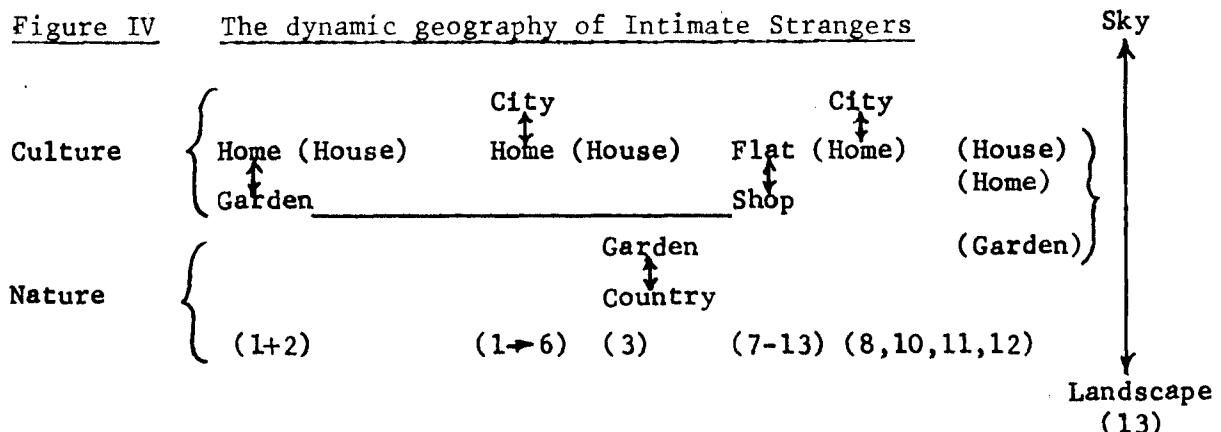
Once they leave their first home and set up shop and house in the same building, the conflicts become more intense. Joan has lost her garden and with it her territory and natural space. But Harry has cut himself off from the city. Their old house becomes a beyond, and Joan returns to it. It is empty and there is no resolution to be found there. The break in their marriage is exaggerated too by her seduction by Lionel, and it is only the doctor Jennie Bowers, and the meeting at the pub with Harry's young school friends, which brings them, finally, together.

The subsequent action (episodes 10-13) in which they act, mostly, as joint heroes, allows them to take their newly found togetherness into the various locations which had previously been threatening. In episode 10, for example, they go to the city to buy a bed, have lunch and visit the cinema. The tensions and the agony of marital relationship have been left behind, in Tunbridge Wells and in the persons of Judith and Matt, daughter and son-in-law respectively. In episode 11 this togetherness is played out in the city again (the Remembrance Day service) and in Portsmouth, against the background of their rediscovery of their past and the slight change in Joan's status.

Episode 13, coda like, revises the themes of the early part of the series; the threat of the city to their relationship: both work and seduction. The threat is resolved in the shop below the flat. The final coming together occurs upstairs in the sitting room. The final episode, also, has an ambivalent significance in terms of this lack, apparently so clearly resolved. The last episode in which Harry takes Joan to a plot of land where he proposes to build their new bungalow revises the dichotomy of home and garden in a r expansion of the domestic space with its potential for conflict. The ambiguity of the message is further emphasized as Harry and Joan pace out the

boundary of the bungalow in the middle of the field; each doing

the same thing but in opposite directions, while we the audience,

as if in a helicopter, ascend slowly until their figures are lost in

the surburban landscape.

Figure IV   The dynamic geography of Intimate Strangers   Sky

This might hesitantly, be reformulated as

House(garden): Countryside(city) $\simeq$ Flat(shop):Landscape(sky) which is a

close approximation to the narrative formula

$$Fx(a); \quad Fy(b) \simeq Fx(b); \quad Fa\text{-}1(y)$$

suggested as central to the movement and definition of the mythic

narrative by Claude Lévi-Strauss.[49]

Here the dominant oppositions are of house and garden, house and city,

city and garden. The flat-shop opposition involves a compression

of the dualism of work and home and a denial of garden, but this is

overcome, at least potentially by the end of the series; though

in the absence of a real house or a real garden a landscape only is

visible. The resolution of the original opposition is not actually

effected.

The purpose of this account is to illustrate one of the particular

consistencies and patternings at work in such a narrative. Here both

the lack, the search for, and the redemption of, a marriage relationship,

is explored in close accord with place. Indeed as we will see shortly,

an understanding of the code of space is essential to an understanding

of the dimensions of much of the action and to its overdetermination.
It could literally be said that there is a place for everything.

However, clearly there is more to the working out of the social
lack, the lack in Joan and Harry's relationship that the ramific-
ations of place and space.   Of great importance are those who are
involved in the actions associated with its redemption, both as
hero and most particularly as potential helper and opposer.

Whereas in our discussion of the physical lack the number of mediators
was small and relatively clearly defined, here the number is larger,
and at least as far as the potential helpers are concerned, as opposed
to the seducers, an amorphous group.   The relative ease with which
the doctors could be identified, and classified in part reflects
their significance in our culture.   In practice, as in the narrative,
they act as mediators, placed on the boundary of nature and culture,
where they bring cultural cures to restore natural health and sometimes
the reverse.   Their capacity to intervene between life and death
makes them potentially and actually powerful figures.

Jennie Bowers (episode 9) though narratively relatively inconsequential,
has this function, though doubly so, for it is her advice (woman to
woman) which forces Joan to do something herself about her relationship
with Harry.   But the directness and unambiguity of Jennie Bowers'
intervention as helper is unique.   Problems of marriage and relationship
are less overtly the source of professional advice in our society,
though increasingly they are becoming so, and even that advice is not
given by a figure as venerated as the medical practitioner.

Table II

Helpers and Seducers   (Social Lack)

Helpers	Male/Female	Young/Old	Married/ Unmarried	Working/ not working	Successful/ unsuccessful
Kate (1 + 11)	-	+	-	+	+
Lansons (3)	+/-	-	+	-	-
Diana (7)	-	+	+	-	-
Jennie Bowers (9)	-	±	?	+	+
Young People (9)	+/-	+	-	+	+
Seducers					
Lionel	+	-	-	+	+
Pat	-	+	-	+	-
P.R. Lady	-	+	-	+	-

The range of helpers, and these are the most central, seems quite wide, though a number of points about it could be suggested. [50] This series seems to value and give potency to the unmarried; here neither Kate nor the young people are married and Jennie Bower's marital state is not mentioned.   Each in his own way, as a working, active young person, acts positively to ameliorate the distress caused by the lack in Harry and Joan's relationship.   Those who fail, or exacerbate that lack, albeit unwittingly, the Lansons and Diana, are married and not working - though their marriage in each case is, like Harry and Joan's, flawed.   The Lanson's only child disappeared fifteen years ago (and without children no marriage is complete - episode 3); Diana's husband is still in Sri Lanka and in any case a previous affair, which she and Joan discuss, effects her status as a completely social figure.   Help it seems, in order to have a chance of success, must come from characters whose attributes are contrary to those of the heroes.

And that help, in its extreme form, in seduction, is more potent

still when it is offered in marginal situations. The three

seducers are, of course, a much more clearly defined group; in this

case being female and young is a recipe for failure. Their territory, ;

like that of the helpers, consists in locations which, structurally,

are mediatory: a pub, a hotel, a roof top, a bed sitting room.

The message, superficially at least, seems to be that the most

powerful magic results from the juxtaposition of the opposite in

character and the ambiguous in location. Unsurprising perhaps, but

a hypothesis worth testing.

The Cultural Lack

The third lack is work. After his heart attack, Harry is offered a

sinecure in his old office by the company secretary, Bob Blake. It

is a non-job, and this negative situation, either literally no work,

or work which is demeaning or intolerable and therefore something less

than work, is the situation which is maintained until episode 7. For

the first half of the series therefore this is the lack which dominates

the narrative and Harry's search for work, for material security and

so on, follows classically, the pattern of journey, test and failure.

The successful redemption of the lack, paradoxically, is of little

narrative consequence, for it functions mostly to dramatise the lack

in their relationship and Joan's perception of it. Eventually this

lack is redeemed (episode 8/9) and interest in it is only maintained

through Joan's limited search for work - in her case the buying and

selling of antiques. The nature of this resolution, that is the redemption

of the lack in terms of a job that involves no production, but only the

buying and selling of objects (books and antiques), will be discussed

later in this chapter.

Too much work contributes to Harry's heart attack. Too little, subsequently, drives him to drink and to Pat. The balance achieved by being his own man, with the bookshop, protects him from the public relations lady and from the temptations of a seat on the board of his old firm (episode 12).

The drama of this search, however, falls to episodes 2, 4, 5 and 6. Here the spatial and actorial determinants of the narrative are clearly revealed, and the plot itself is at its most clear and unambiguous. The lack is revealed as a result of Bob Blake's intervention (episode 2). In episode 4 the offer of a partnership results from a visit to an old publisher in London, and leads to a second visit to London to find money to pay for his share. In the next episode he has found a job nearer home, but he hates it and does little or no work. He finds Pat, and once again finds himself in London. Finally in episode 6 with the same local job, it appears that with the help of Kenyon, he has gained a contract. But his attack on the apprentice destroys what little hope there was of security and success. He returns home a beaten man.

Geographically the dominant opposition here is that between home and city. The city is a man's world; it is the world of work; but without a job it rejects Harry who has to find work closer to home. The clarity and strength of the initial opposition is weakened: first when he finds a job in Tunbridge Wells, and then (episode 7) when he finds his work beneath his home. Joan too, in a parallel movement, is deprived of her work in the garden, and from episode 7 onwards, but especially in episodes 11 and 12, she is also encouraged to work from home. The possibility, a product of their increasing confidence in their work and their relationship, that they will build a house in the field that Harry has found, is narratively significant not just becuase it is the last sequence of the series but because it poses the same spatial

question and opposition with which the series began, though transposed to a new level. (see figure IV)

Harry's failure in work, up to and including episode 6, is symbolic of his failure as a man, and the various contributions to his failure, over determined by the non-consummation of his relationship with Pat, all generate this transfórmation. Harry moves from the hero of the resurrection to an anti-hero and villain. Indeed his subsequent, though understated success with the shop, is 'villainy' as far as Joan is concerned. Even in his success, his heroic status, is, at least for the time being, denied.

This movement too, implies the potent status of the city, a potency emphasised in the familiar metaphor of it as a jungle. Man's cultural activity there is taken to such an extreme, that it becomes a danger similar to that of the untamed (uncultured) nature of a forest. The city takes culture to a point beyond itself, a kind of super culture which is at the same time a bursting of the cultural bonds and a transformation of them; the culture of the city, though a product of man's activity, is like nature, beyond him and beyond his control.[51] The solution to this contradiction is offered in terms of Harry's withdrawal from the city, but because it involved the loss of his manhood, it is hardly an efficient compromise. That this, however, is a fundamental problem for the narrative, as for our own society, is beyond question. Its implications and resonance will be discussed more fully below, as also will the change in the nature of Harry's work, that from production (the manager of a production department of a book and part-work publishing house) to that of non-production, almost consumption, when he starts buying and selling books.

Table III

Helpers/Opposers. (Cultural Lack)

	Male/Female	Young/Old	City/Non City	Successful/Unsuccessfu
Bob Blake (2)	+	+	+	-
Geoffrey (4)	+	-	+	-
Mancroft (4)	+	-	+	-
Daniels (4)	+	-	-	-
Harvesty (4)	+	+	+	-
Foster/Dale (6)	+	+/-	-	-
Kenyon (5)	+	+	+	-
Mrs. Temple (7)	-	-	-	+/-
Accountant (12)	-	+	+	+/-
R.B. (12)	+	+	+	-

The message to be read in this table of the helpers and opposers in the

context of this cultural lack seems to support what I have already stated

about the city.   In terms of this classification the city is the domain

of the young and the male and Harry does not profit by it.   The

potential helpers who are older, Geoffrey and Mancroft are slightly

less extreme in their opposition;   they, for example, postpone

judgement and move Harry one step along in his search.   The difficulties

are only postponed in the case of Foster, who gives Harry his job in

Tunbridge Wells.

However, the clearest contrast comes in the shape of Mrs. Temple, the

owner of the bookshop, who sells to Harry and instructs him in the way

of bookselling (though their discussion is principally about the buying

of books; episode 7).   It is ironic, one might think, to see that in

a world of work, when convention has it that the young thruster holds the

key to success, that it is the retiring old lady bookseller who provides

Harry with his magical agent.   Harry is, literally, transformed once

again, by this transaction, although the solution to the problem of

work is not an unequivocal one; he loses his manhood, and he takes to woman's work.

IV

I have presented some of what seems to me to be of the most significant dimensions of the narrative within the framework of the manifest thread of the physical, social and cultural lacks which are at the centre of the plot of Intimate Strangers. I propose in this section to explore the codes which underlie and constrain these dimensions, and to do so in particular in a way which illustrates the redundancy at work within the text.

The four basic codes of the text, are most obviously the following: the geographical, the techno-economic, the social and the physical. Each is articulated respectively though the basic oppositions of proximity and distance, of nature and culture and the transformation of the one into th other through work, the opposition of male and female, and finally the fundamental dichotomy of life and death. The choice of these codes is warranted by the manifest context of the text, though there are clearly others of significance. As I have already suggested, in principle, everything in the narrative text is coded.

1)   The Geographical Code
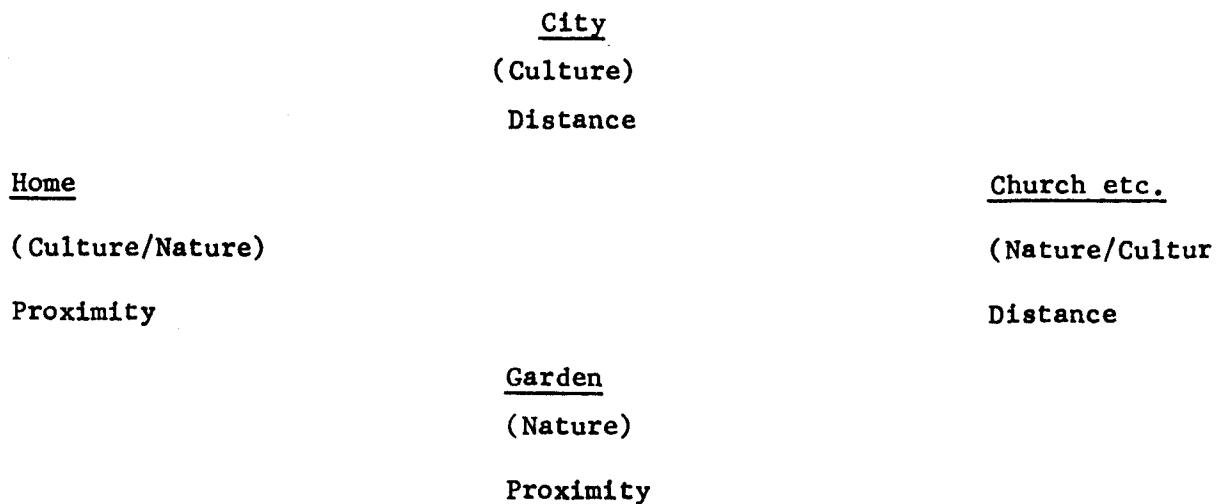
The action is placed significantly in three areas: the home, the garden and the city. The first two are established in the opening sequence, and until episode 7 are constantly reaffirmed, and the third is equally of continuous importance, until its influence is denied in the final episode. Home and garden are together opposed to the city in terms of proximity. Their distinctiveness is underlined by the activities associated with each and their privileged actors.

Further there is a fourth 'place' which completes the structure in the sense that it complements and opposes the home in the way that the city complements and opposes the garden. The city and the garden are both places of work, but the former is both distant and distinctly cultural, the latter close and significantly natural. The clarity of that opposition is mediated on the one hand, domestically, by the home, and on the other by a group of transitional locations, such as church, pub, hospital, which are united in their distance and in their ambiguity. In churches, in pubs, in hospitals, men are faced with the limits of culture, either cosmically, narcotically or medically; at home men are faced, in their marriage, with the limits of nature. Whereas the city and the garden are uncomplicated in their opposition and in their structural position, home and 'church' are more complex, acting as mediators, on the one hand on this side of nature (home) and on the other, on the far side of culture (church), between city and garden.

The basic geographical code schematically looks like this:

Figure V   The geographical code

<div align="center">

City

(Culture)

Distance

</div>

Home   Church etc.

(Culture/Nature)   (Nature/Cultur

Proximity   Distance

<div align="center">

Garden

(Nature)

Proximity

</div>

and this is the basic structure within which the action is undertaken. Given this we can begin to understand the narrative significance of the various moves of location, in particular that of episode 3, where they

go on holiday. The countryside becomes in terms of the above scheme a natural there and the move both increases the distance and strengthens the opposition between nature and culture. If Harry needs to recover from the effects of the city, although he begins in the garden (episode 2), the return to natural health must be undertaken as far away, both geographically and logically, as possible.

Another move, that from the home and garden to the flat and shop, includes a weakening in the opposition, both in terms of the denial of nature (the sale of the house and the loss of the garden) and the bringing of culture closer to home (the opening of the shop under the flat). Once again there is a logic here which the narrative quite reasonably exploits; a consolidation, compression and a minimisation of the difference and the conflict between nature and culture; reculer pour mieux sauter.

Schematically we can represent the moves as follows:
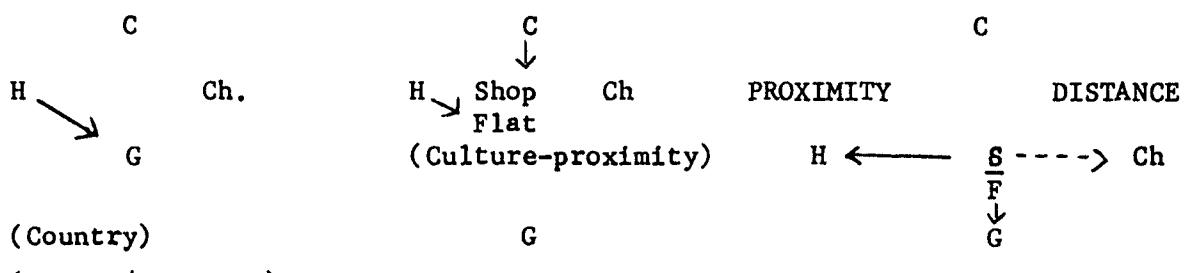
Figure VI   Dynamics within the geographical code

a) Episode 3   b) Episodes 7-13   c) Episode 13 last sequence

```
        C                        C                        C
                                 ↓
H ⟍        Ch.          H ⟍ Shop    Ch       PROXIMITY              DISTANCE
    ⟍                      ⟋ Flat
      ↘                                                              S
        G               (Culture-proximity)      H ←—— S ----> Ch
                                                           F
(Country)                        G                         ↓
(Nature/Distance)                                          G
```

C = City   S = Shop
H = Home   F = Flat
Ch = Church etc.
G = Garden

The last movement, albeit only potentially, involves a return to the basic structure and at the same time a reassertion of the difference between home and garden (proximity) and city and church (distance); within the narrative distance has been denied only to be re-established visually as we, the

audience, ascend heavenward. Harry and Joan's proximity and familiarity

become our distance and strangeness. Indeed our position in this final

tableau is the one most understated in the narrative as a whole, that of

the church.

The dynamic within this code is of two kinds. The first has already been

made apparent, albeit implicitly. It is a movement within the categories

of the code as the action develops chronologically. This is a movement,

dialectically produced, by the interaction of message and code, and of

logic and chronologic: events, tests and transformations at one level,

effect the balance of the geographical categories at another. The

second dimension of the movement is, however, more obvious and here

the journey becomes a significant mediating category. Not every movement

is marked in the narrative, but given the significance of this code every

marked journey is at the same time a mediation, involving those who take

it in a transformation. So Harry and Joan's journeys to the city, often

accompanied by noise (especially during their return from seduction or near

seduction) becomes significant both chronologically and logically. The

movement from a situation of extreme culture to one in which culture and

nature live in uneasy compromise (home) is in mythical terms, an extreme

one and often fraught with danger. Journeys are important dimensions

of narrative; their significance lies not only in the potential for

narrative postponement, but in their categorial mediation.

2) The Social Code

The action of the narrative centres around the home, and around Harry and

Joan's marriage. Much of the significance of the drama involves the re-

lationship between them and other related figures. The relations between

the sexes are therefore of prime concern. Both Harry and Joan, as a result

of the events and the tests which they face, change their positions re-

spective to each other and with respect to the rest of the world. The
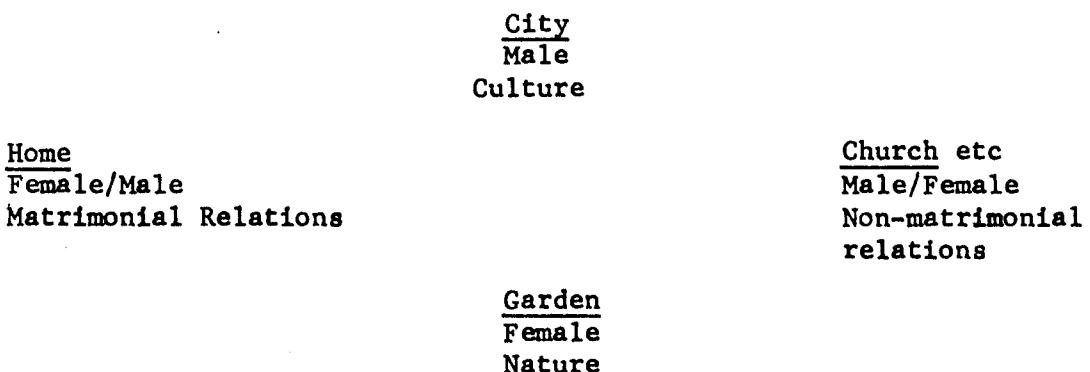
manifestation of these changes is indeed in their geographical movements; in these changes of location is expressed the threat to, and the changes in, their social status.

To begin with, there is a very clear distinction of male and female, expressed, as I have said, primarily in their territory: Joan's territory is the garden, close to nature. Harry's is the city, close to culture; and the home where the events of their marriage are played out is, in a sense, their joint territory. Marriage is seen as an imposition of culture over nature; a primary but always vulnerable institution where the natural (instinct, passion, etc.) and the cultural (the rules of social intercourse) meet.

After Harry's 'death' (episode 1), he briefly attempts recovery in Joan's garden and then in the country, again Joan's territory, emphasised by her previous visit before the war. Subsequent developments take Harry back to the city, but his failure in a man's world is unambiguous. His illness has left him less than a man and in his return home, in his setting up shop and even in his final involvement as architect of the new home, he has moved closer to womanhood. Joan meanwhile moves in the opposite direction; after Harry's failure, which is her failure too, she loses her garden, her naturalness, and becomes involved in the world of business, buying and selling antiques. She moves closer to manhood.

These movements, and particularly Harry's, are articulated in the context of other relationships, both positively and negatively expressed. Given the basic geographical schema (above) we can add the sexual/social dimensions to it.

Figure VII

<div align="center">

City
Male
Culture

</div>

Home   Church etc
Female/Male   Male/Female
Matrimonial Relations   Non-matrimonial
                                                            relations

<div align="center">

Garden
Female
Nature

</div>

The characters who emanate from the different locations, but who are not
logically tied to them, given this classification - above all city-women,
become potentially threatening. And correlatively if a character finds
himself or herself in an opposite location, that itself is potentially
threatening. What is interesting, as far as this series is concerned,
is that Harry maintains his integrity against the threats of city women
(less potent because not in their 'natural environment') whereas Joan,
herself not at home in the city, succumbs to its male representative
(doubly accented in his liminal significance - he lives in Manchester,
beyond the city territorially, and logically, in his predatory actions).
It does seem that, beyond the garden, it is still very much a man's world.
For example again, although it is a female doctor who provides the advice
which seems to transform their marriage, it is advice given to Joan who in
turn transforms it into a series of cultural activities, hair-do, shopping,
cooking, each of them not just to please Harry, but in terms of the code,
to bring her closer to him.

The movement in this narrative, parallelling that of the spatial movements,
involves therefore not a blurring of the boundary of man and woman, male
and female, but at least provisionally (the final sequence leaves the
possibility of any reworking open) the bringing of them closer together.

The opposition between man and woman expressed by the opposition of city and garden is weakened by a pulling in of the action towards the home: work comes home, and home is the site (the church also) where man and woman, nature and culture, somehow reach their unstable compromise, in close proximity to each other. The movement through the narrative is expressed then in these terms, that of a weakening of the opposition of man and woman, though of course, at a manifest level, both Harry and Joan gain confidence in their new-found togetherness.

The second dimension of movement is within the code and within the relation of the sexes: here it is sex and conversation, and the opposite of both, sleep, which act as mediators between male and female. If sex is the most extreme form of communication between man and woman then sleep is the most extreme form of non-communication. Each in a certain sense is natural. Conversation, polite and angry, informed or boring, finds itself between these two extremes. It is therefore the most neutral of mediations. In sex, sleep and conversation not only are the manifest relations of the marriage expressed, but each is a significant and dynamic element of the social code.

3) The Techno-economic Code

The dimensions of work now follow the scheme already outlined. We can distinguish between cultural work and natural work, that is 'work' done in the city by men and work done in the garden by women. We can also distinguish, importantly, between production and consumption.

That the category city - men - work versus garden - woman - work is so clearly defined in the series can be illustrated once again by referring to the women who in the series seem to transcend their categorial limits. Both Pat and the Public Relations lady, in one sense clearly the doyennes of city life, are in another, less unambigously so. Pat runs an employment

agency in Tunbridge Wells. She therefore helps men find work (at least it is only to men that she refers when she describes her work). The Public Relations lady is also not directly involved in production; she too is concerned to sell Harry to the public. Equally Kate, the only, other significant female worker in the series, (Judith a more marginal figure, actually also buys and sells in a store) is not involved in production, but in translation. Her appearance in the garden is, to be sure, (episode 1 and 2) as a nonworker, but she is happier to be there than Harry is.

But the techno-economic code, apart from having either a cultural or natural dimension, also involves the difference between production and consumption.[52] Once again both space and sex role are clearly opposed as producer and consumer at the beginning of the series. Harry goes off to the city to work as a production manager. Joan goes to the saleroom to buy an antique and do the rest of the shopping. Her friends are involved in a similar way.
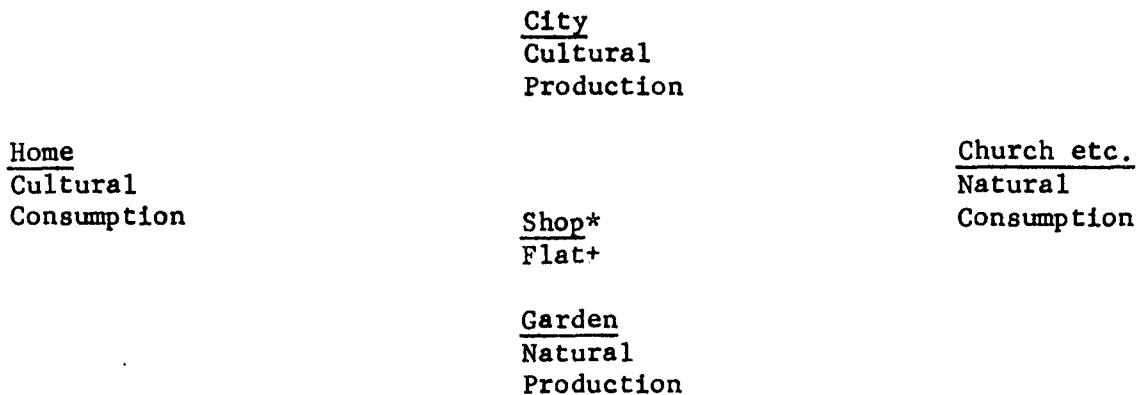
Their joint failure in their respective activities - Harry's failure in the city, and Joan's failure to keep her garden forces Harry away from production, and Joan towards it. Each movement, like that of their sex-roles, weakens the opposition between them. Harry buys a bookshop, and starts selling books. Joan is eventually persuaded to buy antiques (we never actually see her sell them, and her single attempt to sell a book to one of her friends (episode 7) ends in failure). As a result, Harry becomes less than a producer, though his distinctiveness is preserved by virtue of his design of the new house, and Joan becomes more than just a consumer, though here the weakening of her economic position is even less than that of Harry's. But the change in their economic status allows them

to work together; and this is approved by the narrative once again in the final sequence when they, together but separately, work in a field (garden to be) in their pacing out of the house's boundary prior to its construction.

Diagrammatically the structure of the techno-economic code can be presented in this way:

Figure VIII   The techno-economic code

City
Cultural
Production

Home   Church etc.
Cultural   Natural
Consumption   Shop*   Consumption
                               Flat+

                               Garden
                               Natural
                               Production

*work without cultural production: only selling - buying.\
+work/life without natural production: ho gardening.
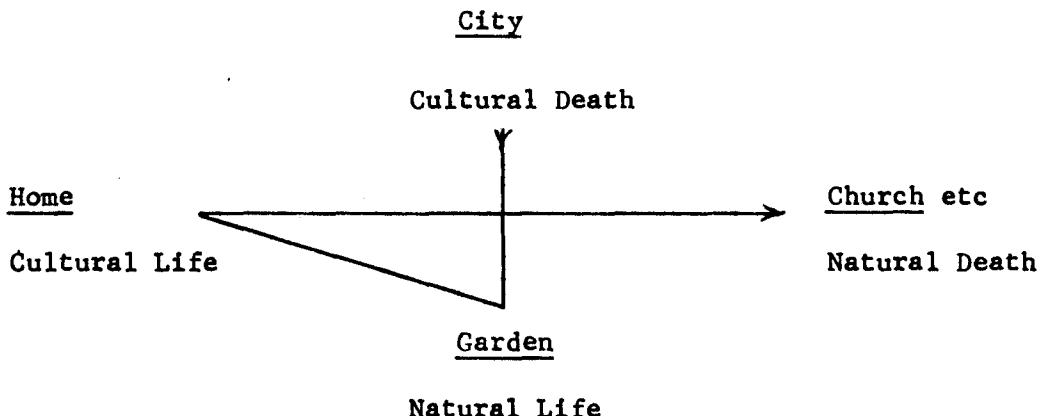
The Physical Code

The fourth and final important level of coding to be recognised in Intimate Strangers is that of the physical; here the opposition of life and death is the most significant. This code is perhaps not as clear-cut as some of the others; it has something of the cosmic or transcendental about it, but it nevertheless is manifested in the text in terms of Harry's heart attack and as such relates once again and underlines the geographically based scheme already elucidated. Together with the categories of nature and culture each of the four areas of activity is identifiable in terms of whether it affirms or denies life or death.

Figure IX   The Physical Code

City

Cultural Death

Home   Church etc

Cultural Life   Natural Death

Garden

Natural Life
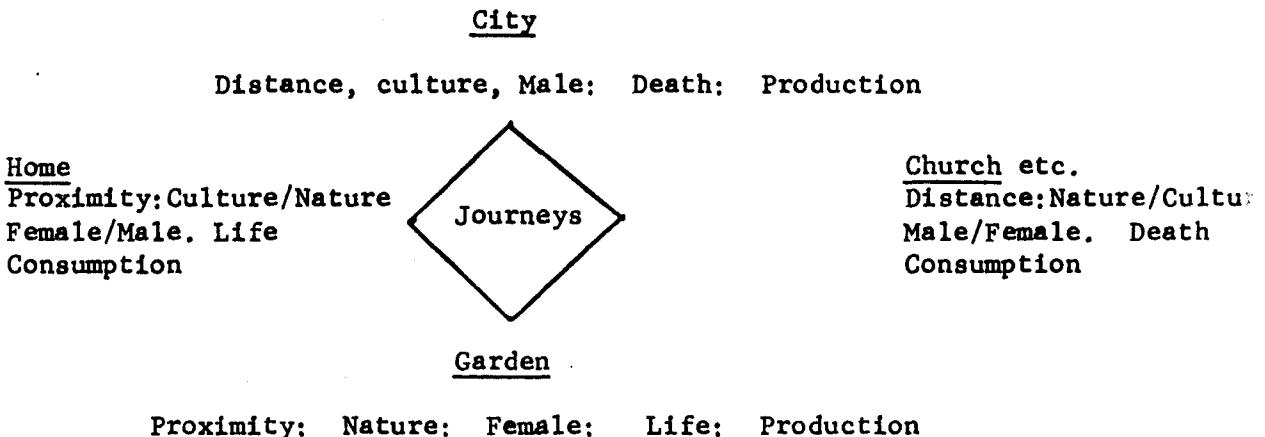
Harry's 'death' is the product of overwork and his involvement with

the city; his recovery is the product of his time in the garden and

in the countryside, affirmed finally by his deeper immersion in home

life and the bringing of work there.   The natural 'death' associated

with church, and with other transformational locations, appear as so

often with the church only marginally. [53]   In episode 3 and again

in episode 13 Harry's relationship with the past, in the first case

with heroes that have long since died, in the second with his mother

who is dying, is accompanied by visits to church.   But even here he

is something of an outsider.   Joan has to intercede for him and to

lead him in prayer.   She is after all, by virtue of her nature,

closer to and more involved in God.   The only exception to this, and

it is a significant one, is again in the last episode.   Harry and Joan

go to Church together, but more importantly Harry is portrayed, after

that almost ritual dinner with the family as the great architect.   His

mother has died her natural death and now his and Joan's mortality is

suggested as they become two tiny specks in the bourgeois wilderness

of the field, garden and house of Tunbridge Wells.

If we were to integrate the codes so far discussed, the ensuing

structure would present a remarkable consistency and simplicity.

Figure X   Summary Structure

City

Distance, culture, Male: Death: Production

Home   Church etc.
Proximity:Culture/Nature   Journeys   Distance:Nature/Cultu:
Female/Male. Life   Male/Female. Death
Consumption   Consumption

Garden

Proximity: Nature: Female: Life: Production

The significant movement within the narrative is away from, and a

denial of, the city, its maleness and its association with death and

dangerous insecurity.   But that denial equally involves that of the

garden, the natural world of woman and life.   What is asserted therefore

by the compression of the structure into flat and shop is cultural life

and the balanced and relatively secure existence of male and female,

and of consumption.   The corollary of this, finally but only implicitly

stated in the final shot, is of a natural death, a death equally of man

and woman and a recognition of the natural limits of mankind.   The city

at its worst is a super-culture;   its very life is murderous.   The

church, equally distinct, is by virtue of its equilibrium (the balance

of nature over culture) much less threatening though equally a location,

though of a different order, of the transcendance beyond the cultural.

Therefore the fragility of man's cultural existence is constantly being

affirmed - through excess in the city, in its weakness in marriage and

in the mediatory role of the church.   Given this, the garden, most

strongly the preserve of nature, is an escape though, in a man's world,

not a very significant one;   nor is it particularly potent in its

curative or threatening action.   (the city's super-nature takes over

Therefore whereas for a primitive, nature is the source of all that is

threatening, for us, at least for those of us who read the text of

Intimate Strangers, that boundary between the known and the unknown,

the controlled and the uncontrolled, has been transformed. The city

is the jungle and the journeys to and from it, as we have noted, are

fraught. Why else would Joan put on her fur coat to travel to London?

What other significance can be attached to the noise and the complexity

of the journeys there and back? Why is Harry (episode 4) accosted by

an old friend in a railway train compartment and told about the dog

eats dog of the city? Why finally is the journey of the agent of

disaster, Bob Blake (episode 2), given so much stress, whereas Kenyon's

(episode 6) is not?

I will return to the problems of interpreting the messages of the text

shortly, but I would like first of all to draw attention to the other

levels of coding, too complex for a detailed analysis to be undertaken

here, but which fill out, as it were, the bare bones of the structure

so far described.

It is tempting to pursue the structure of multiple codes to a smaller

scale and to enquire whether, or to what extent, it manifests itself

within the domestic geography of the home. Much has been written on

the significance attached to different areas of social space and to

the relationship between that and the space of the wider society[54].

In our own society, though we are familiar enough with the different

functions each room of the house would be expected to fulfil, we are

less aware that these areas may be the expression of a simple logic.

However, the fact that in Intimate Strangers the four significant rooms

of a house are all given due weight leads to an enquiry as to how they

might be related to each other. Rather more tentatively, perhaps,

than earlier in this chapter, I suggest that the domestic geography of

Of course, women are also recipients of Joan's culinary largesse,

but again in the series only five times; once with Daniels' secretary

who does actually spend much time in the kitchen, and the other four

times are with the daughters, Kate who does not help (she has links with

the male world) and with Judith who does. Harry's only attempt to

help occurs when he is drunk and angry; in other words less than a man.

Eating is a natural activity; it is also in the dining room a public

one.

The other opposition brings together the sitting room and bedroom,

the former the domain of cultural conversation and natural sociability,

in public, the latter of natural communication and its denial of it in

sleep, in private. Conversation is opposed to sex and sleep as I

have already suggested. The dimension of the public and the private

only reinforces that opposition.
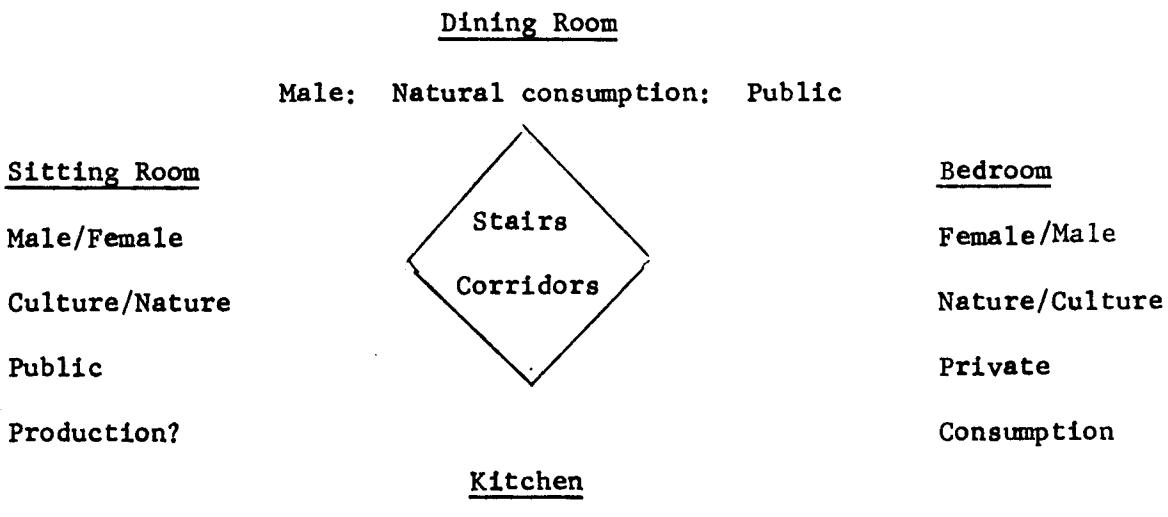
Kitchen and dining room are linked also in their relative proximity;

each is the location of an unchallenged 'gender in dominance'.

Equally and centrally linked are the sitting room and bedroom, each

the site of conflict in active communication; a communication unmediated

by the production of food. Dining room and kitchen are, as I have

suggested, metonymically related; sitting room and bedroom, metaphorically

so.

The relationship between this coded structure and that of the global

geography of the series turns especially on the change in the relationships

of sex-role and activity. Whereas in the world, man is the cultural

producer and woman is the natural consumer, in the home woman is the

culture producer and the man is the natural consumer. The threshold

becomes not just the site for change of values, but the site of a fundamental

transformation in social and cultural identity.[55] To speculate that

Harry and Joan's house (and then their flat) can be summarised as follows. The differences and similarities between it and-its codes, and those of the structures of the whole will be immediately obvious.

Figure XI   Domestic Geography

Dining Room

Male: Natural consumption: Public

Sitting Room		Bedroom
Male/Female	Stairs	Female/Male
Culture/Nature	Corridors	Nature/Culture
Public		Private
Production?		Consumption

Kitchen

Female: Cultural production: Private

A word or two of explanation is in order. As before, there are two orders of opposition, in this case that between kitchen and dining room, and then that between sitting room and bedroom. The kitchen is the private world of female cultural activity. It is Joan's territory par excellence: she is at home there, Harry is a guest. In the kitchen, Joan works, she transforms food and prepares meals. Only breakfast is eaten jointly by them there, all other meals, apart from Joan's lonely snacks (episode 2 and 5) are eaten in the dining room. It is private; the only strangers allowed in are women, (episode 4, Daniels' secretary). Opposed to the kitchen, and metonymically related to it obviously, is the dining room where men, often publicly and in the presence of women, naturally consume the food that has been prepared elsewhere. In the dining room Joan is the servant and the helper - Harry receives - whether he choses to eat (4) or not (5).

what is true for this television series is true for life is tempting.
We might avoid that temptation but only partly by suggesting that it is
at least more clear on television.

Much has been written on fashion as a signifying system, the code
almost non plus ultra for a culture so dominated by the visual, and
one in which the finest distinctions of status can be expressed and
recognised.[56]   In everyday life our experience of the clothes we
wear is a multi-sensual one; we can recognise colour and texture as
well as cut and combination.   Our judgement is informed in relation
to time (last year's fashion) and place (not suitable for Ascot); to
occasion and judgement of personality and natural aesthetic ("mutton
dressed as lamb"). Distinctions of sex role, of expressions of
exclusion from, or denial of, established degrees of status, are all
expressible in the clothes we wear (or do not wear). As Marshall
Sahlins[57] suggests our clothes are almost totemic in their relationship
not just to the natural order of things (cloth, colour) but also in their
emblematics.   Culture is created and signified (indeed in the same
process) at a level which is both individual and social, by the clothing
industry.

The complexity and range of the codes of fashion are worth noting.
In colour and in texture (black/white, silk/linen) and in both cut and
combination (skirt/blouse, shirt/tie) a web of meaning is generated.
The complete outfit, in so far as it aims for correctness or grammaticality
(e.g. consistency in a current fashion of clothes and accessories)
presents the perfect equilibrium of individual selection and cultural
expectation. To produce a grammar of fashion would therefore be a tall
order, not just in terms of the complexity of its levels but also in its
instability; for the relation of a langue and parole is much less
certain than that of natural language. Roland Barthes' attempts to

generate such a grammar depends on the descriptions that fashion

magazines construct to distinguish one garment from another, not of the

visibility of the fashions themselves; and Marshall Sahlins has also

withdrawn, in an otherwise fascinating analysis, from the totality of

the task.[58]

The problems of deciphering the code of fashion on television are on the

one hand more simple, on the other hand not more so, than doing it within

the culture at large. It is simpler because the code is less rich: not

texture, and for some no colour, make the visual impression less full.

On the other hand, the process by which fashion on television is created

is the same as the one by which it is created in the world beyond,

though the first is generally dependent on the second. In other words,

the signifying of clothes on television is dependent on the general

process of signifying in fashion, though as we have seen in terms of the

dominant codes, likely to be more unambiguous in its meaning.[59]

I do not propose here, to explore in detail the intricacies of the code

of fashion. The task, even for one series of programmes such as Intimate

Strangers, would for obvious reasons be too enormous and would demand a

study of its own. The point I wish to make however, and to support

illustratively, is that fashion constitutes another lever of expression

which in its most basic employment in a television series such as this,

operates to support the dominant codes of place, sex-role and techno-

economics. In practice, in the production of a television drama, a

great deal of attention is given to the clothes and to the details of the

environment; the effort to create a consistent verisimilitude is great.

Just as in the relation between action and place, where the judgements of
appropriateness are so fundamental, so too in the relation of fashion
and sex-role/place/economics, the same judgement is at work. Those
who work wear working clothes, those who entertain likewise; women and
men most obviously are distinguished by their appearance. The
significance of this most recent excursion into banality is that it is
by virtue of it, that the mediatory figures, as far as the action is
concerned, can express their transitional or transformational function
by the clothes they wear. Kate can, and does wear trousers, for example;
Pat does too; both she and the PR lady in their separates (skirt and top)
wear shirts. Joan more determinately perhaps, in terms of age and sex,
always wears skirts. For her, significant narrative events are marked
not by the detail of dress, but by her coats and by the change of
hairstyle.

Harry's progress through the series is marked, in what may seem to be
an obvious fashion, in terms of suit and striped shirt and tie (work)
to jacket, trousers, soft collared shirts (no work), to open necked
shirts and trousers (work in the shop). His outfit is clearly opposed
to that of Tom Daniels in episode 4, who faces Harry's suit with shirt
and tie but with sleeves rolled up. Joan's transformation into worker
is marked by the replacement of her fur coat (worn on the trip to London),
the most 'natural' of her outer garments, by that of a sheepskin, the
skin of a domesticated animal.

The pertinent oppositions from which the code can be constructed are
barely suggested here. Within the relative crudity of space and the
basic elements of work and sex role, fashion articulates a subtle and often
vital system of signification. It is vital not only because through it
we can make judgements of status and action without actually knowing
anything more than about the clothes we are seeing, but also because

given our understanding of basic distinctions of place and sex role

and so on, we can make judgements on the appropriateness of a particular

item of clothing or of a particular outfit.   Whereas in the real world,

such a judgement generates a particular response in social action,

in the television narrative, such judgements are of functional

significance.   Drama is created in, among other things, the relationship

of clothes, action and place;   and in particular in the disharmony or

conflict within that relationship.   To be wrongly dressed, just as to

act inappropriately, is significant not just on its own terms but as a

marker for the future course of the narrated action.   Fashion then is

one, perhaps the most important visual marker in the overdetermination

of television's drama and in the creation of verisimilitude.

I have less to say about the other codes, mostly because of their potential

complexity, but also because not enough information is given in the text of

Intimate Strangers.   Names for example, just like each item of clothing,

though more interestingly, because less the result of conscious deliberation,

speak of and about characters.[60]   The names are coded if we wish to

look at them in that way, once again between male and female (and their medi-

ators);   and there are those with natural and those with cultural

connotations.   We have perceptions of names as strong or weak, those

of strangeness and familiarity, of tradition and novelty.   Once again

the dimensions are many, and the fascination immense.   In so far as

these, and other names speak to us, then they are coded.   It is my

contention that naming too is a part of the overall, generally multi-

dimensional coding of the television narrative.   Even if we neither

know nor care to think of a connection between lion and Lionel, the woman

eating seducer, and the biblical Daniel and Daniels the aggressive

businessman, the connections however superficial, can be and need to

be explored.   Indeed the two slightly unwordly characters Harry and

Joan meet on holiday in the Lake District, introduce themselves as

Lanson ("as in Champagne"),and my wife Phoebe ("as in waves"). Lanson's

own first name is Hector and their significance as representatives of

some mythical past, opposed to the mundane reality of Paynter ("as

in dingy"), is freely recognised within the text.

The acoustic and alimentary codes, so apparently dominant in the myths

of South and North America are not so clearly represented here. The

preparation of food seems no longer to have great significance as a

part of transition between nature and culture. That boundary has moved

beyond the culinary, and in a certain sense is now to be found around

the back, represented both in the distinction between home and country,

but also in a much more equivocal but powerful way between home and city,

where the city appears as a culture beyond. The preparation and

consumption of food therefore has much more to do with the reinforcement

of sex roles than with this other vital mediation. Narratively it also

functions to postpone the significant action and to provide an environment

(social) where transformations occur, where deals are done, conflicts

are generated or resolved and so on. Similarly there is little

evidence for the elaborate acoustic coding which Claude Lévi-Strauss

unearthed in his analysis of South American myths.[61] Noise as such

seems to be generated and therefore functionally important often when a

significant transformation or mediation is undertaken (in Intimate Strangers

journeys to and from London, especially those prior to and after seduction

or near seduction), where it seems to signify danger or when there is a

conflict in an otherwise harmonious arrangement of the different codes

(again in Intimate Strangers, when Harry mows the lawn). Music, of

course, is used conventionally to introduce and to close a particular

narrative episode. In Intimate Strangers it accompanies the text only

twice. Once when Harry and Joan go to the cinema and then it is on the

soundtrack of the film, and secondly when the P.R. lady puts on a record

which might have accompanied her seduction of Harry. To talk of codes

in this connection is probably premature, but nevertheless not theoretically

incorrect.

One final point. In much of the discussion of codes above, the

dichotomy of nature and culture appears often, and is seen to be

illuminating in many ways and for most of the codes that have been

disentangled. In one sense this seems, for a society like ours, to be

an odd dichotomy with which to begin, and indeed one whose appositeness

is open to question. It is, however, empirically, of great importance;

its explanatory usefulness suggests the difference between what we take

to be a part of nature and what we take to be part of culture is of

continuing significance. That this is not entirely fanciful, nor not

indeed simply the result of the arbitrary imposition of a method on to

an otherwise unexplained piece of date, is supported very much in our

ways of speech, and in particular in the metaphors and similes used,

for example, in this series itself. Thus, as we have already noted,

the city is a jungle, and in it men claw (episode 4) each other. In

another context, machines become women (Harry's car), or if they are old,

dinosaurs (episode 5); businesses are born (episode 4) and can or

cannot be milked (episode 4). We can be as right as rain (episode 4)

or of a sunny disposition; we rabbit on (episode 5) and we cannot teach

old dogs new tricks (episode 5). People become transport (5) and refer

to themselves, rather than their cars, as badly parked. These examples

collected from two episodes of the series written by two different

authors, are meant only to be suggestive. The significance of the

metaphor, inter alia, but importantly, lies in its transgression of the

culture/nature boundary. Machines become humans or animals, and the

supreme product of culture, the city, conspires in the same way, and is

expressed in the same terms, as the jungle of old.[62]

V

Implicit and sometimes explicit in what has gone before, which has

purported to be a discussion of the various levels according to which

a television drama series is coded, has been an interpretation. The

question of how we are to understand the message that these codes generate

is not one, as I have already suggested, which will admit of an unambiguous

answer. It is for this reason that I have avoided presenting a dictionary,

a lexicon, as a key to the reading of a text such as Intimate Strangers.

While it might be possible to generate something in the way suggested by

A.J. Greimas or on the lines outlined by Jerrold Fodor and Jerry A. Katz

in their early paper[63] it seemed, rather like a dictionary of dreams,

to be of little general relevance. Much more useful then, hopefully,

was an outline of the principles according to which a text such as this

was constructed, the generation of a structure rather than a list of words.

The structure is then a key to the understanding of the message of the text.

The garden, the city, the kitchen and the bedroom are in Lévi-Straussian

terms concrete categories, categories full of empirical reference, which

the text takes from the world of experience and whose ordering in the text

is a measure of our culture's capacity to understand itself. However,

whatever is said about the message of the text in terms of a statement

derived from its structuration, that message is never final and the

structuring is never complete.[64] There is a space between the structure,

however full and the totality of the text. It is in that space that any

interpretation must find its way; given the relative unsophistication of

the proposed basic structure, but also the relative unsophistication of

the text, the interpretation is indeed a provisional one.

We can begin by saying that at one, important level the series is about

Harry and Joan Paynter, their marriage and family relationships and

about the way in which they both face, in these relationships, the implication

of the events following Harry's heart attack.   And if we being here, at

the level of plot, then we can recognise the three problems with which the

narrative has to deal;   the problem of physical health, that of

relationships - in particular that between husband and wife, and that of

a man (and to a lesser extent, a woman) and his work.

With the model of myth elaborated by Claude Lévi-Strauss in mind we can

then go on to ask, through the narrative, but beyond it, what it is that

each manifest problem has to do with the society/acts as host to these
                                              which

stories.   Is there, then, in any sense a significant problem, a significant

contradiction, within the society which at this time one might expect

popular texts such as this to explore?   Most centrally, and quite obviously,

there appear to be two.   The first concerns the changing and often

conflicting balance in the relationship between man and woman;   and

secondly and correlatively is the problem posited for both, in family

and in marriage, by the changing demands of work in an industrialised

and post-industrial society.

Both of these problems are real and vital.   They are not the concoction

of the media of mass communication but arise as a direct result of the

inherent conflicts of industrial society and in particular an industrial

society which still bows to the liberal democratic traditions of equality,

fraternity and liberty.(65)   These problems are no less real than

those of cross - cousin marriage which the Tsimshian Indians must face,

above all because culture cannot and does not provide a simple solution.

It cannot because there is no simple solution;   but on the other hand it

must, in a sense, because each individual in the society, as he moves

through it, has to find a solution for himself.

In many ways, and predictably enough, the answers, or attempts at answers, which the text of Intimate Strangers presents, are conservative, but they are no less interesting for that. Despite his various trials, Harry remains master of the household. His position as culture-hero is restated in his plans to build their new house, and his cultural centrality is reaffirmed in the way that the various women who surround him continually act as mediators. The women are marginal beings, either threatening (Pat and P.R. lady) because they are outside marriage, or supportive (Joan) when she is contented within marriage. Their marginality is that of being closer to nature than man and in the likelihood that in a male dominated society and culture, women can be used to define those margins. Seduction and cure both involve negatively and positively an attempt to de-culture man, to bring him closer to nature. Correlatively these women who seduce or cure, define for man the limits of his world, the world of the masculine, the world preeminently of culture. For women the problem has different connotations. The clarity of this boundary has been eroded and to a significant degree women's naturalness is being denied in contemporary society; in her incorporation into masculine culture her traditional role and significance is being threatened.

The solution offered by Intimate Strangers is by no means conclusive. Firstly Joan is middle-aged, her children have grown up and so her particular solution only involves her relationship with Harry. Even that begins by her adjustment to his life.[66] Her subsequent involvement as the buyer and seller of antiques is a very small move in the direction of serious cultural activity; she is still essentially a consumer, and still essentially a marginal being.

Harry's solution is more positive and involves a greater movement, although even this is deceptive. The denial of city - work, and the withdrawal to suburban work is accompanied, as we have seen, by a change in its quality. Harry is no longer a producer; and he too takes on women's work (literally - he replaces Mrs. Temple as the manager/owner of the bookshop). This denial and this move is articulated spatially in their move to live above the shop and in Joan's loss of her garden.

In every way therefore the narrative suggests withdrawal, a withdrawal above all from the extremes of city and garden, a withdrawal from nature and from super-nature and from the margins. It is in this withdrawal, it is suggested, in the comfort of a categorial closeness, that the particular problems of relationships at work in an industrial society can be solved. There are no other solutions, for not one relationship in the entire series is anything less than imperfect measured against the ideal which Harry and Joan believe they have achieved. But this solution in its withdrawal, is at the same time a refusal to attempt the solution. Work in terms of production is denied; women's naturalness is denied; it is in a real sense therefore, a petit bourgeois, not to say Victorian, solution to a contemporary problem. And in a sense the narrative in its last gasp acknowledges just that: Joan and Harry even in their expected retirement, look to re-establish at least one part of the loss. It is not too fanciful to see their final pacing in the empty field as a further attempt to find in the wilderness a new resolution of these central concerns, and maybe their disappearance in this wilderness, as we the audience fly higher, signifies that the narrative recognises that in reality the only solution is in death.

At this level of explanation the message is clear; indeed it is part of my contention that television's narratives are particularly constricted in their ambiguity and this ambiguity is not just a product of the sledgehammer of a method which has been brought to bear.

Intimate Strangers, by any account, is not the most simple of television narratives, compared to the Hollywood plots of city police or Californian private eyes, it is subtelty personified. But even here the structure of the text, both in its chronologic and in its logic, is clear and unambiguous. The narrative as a whole takes something from the folktale in the relative simplicity of its story and in its morphology, and something from myth in the structure of its context through the basic categories of concrete experience, and in the attempt to resolve a particular contradiction of the host society. It is therefore exclusively neither folktale, nor myth, but in its attenuation of these forms of narrative it demonstrates the continuity of their tradition and preserves the power in their communication.

The relationship, then, between the text and the context is one of a filter, and of a reconstitution of the social and cultural sediment. If our world and our experience of it, is complex and ambiguous and if we are uncertain or insecure in its order, then the television narrative, like all the popular narratives of old, attempts to restate the outlines of the experienced problems of the everyday world. It does so in ways which lock the apparent uniqueness of the moment to the substantial continuity of traditional narration. Its effectiveness and its power lies in this combination. Television, above all, is a machine for the reduction of the ambiguous and the uncertain. It is neither teacher nor priest. Rather it is a kind of cultural logician whose work consists in the continual and endless rearrangement of the elements in the contemporary manifestation of eternal dilemmas. Intimate Strangers was one, and by now probably a forgotten attempt to do just that.

Chapter 6. Footnotes and References

1. cf. Claude Lévi-Strauss, <u>The Raw and the Cooked</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. p. 111. "...every myth is an organised totality; the development of the narrative throws light on an underlying structure which is independent of the relation between what comes before and what comes after."

2. Marshall McLuhan, <u>Understanding Media</u>. <u>op. cit</u>.; cf. also Zev Barbu, Popular Culture: A Sociological Approach, in C.W.E. Bigsby (Ed.) <u>Approaches to Popular Culture</u>. London. 1976. 39-68.

3. cf. The Glasgow Media Group, <u>Bad News</u> <u>op. cit</u>.

4. cf. Edmund Leach, <u>Genesis as Myth</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. p. 35: "...if it really be the case that the message contained in a myth or a set of myths is communicated through the structure, then it would be astonishing if 2,000 years of intensive Biblical Scholarship had not gained some inkling of this fact. If, on the other hand, structural analysis of Biblical material were never to reveal 'messages' which are not in some degree already known, then we should have good grounds for supposing that the whole business is an accidental triviality." cf. Claude Lévi-Strauss, <u>Structural Anthropology</u> Vol. 2. <u>op. cit</u>. p.80: "...it is hopeless to expect a structural analysis to change our way of perceiving concrete social relations. It will only explain them better." and Marcel Détienne. <u>The Gardens of Adonis</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 1977. p. 131. below.

5. Edmund Leach. <u>op. cit</u>.

6. Roland Barthes, <u>Critical Essays</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. p. 215. "Structuralism takes the real, decomposes it, then recomposes it; this appears to be little enough (which makes sure that the structuralist enterprise is 'meaningless', 'uninteresting', 'useless' etc.). Yet from another point of view, this 'little enough' is decisive, for between the two objects, or the two tenses of structuralist activity, there occurs something new, and what is new is nothing less than generally intelligible: the simulacrum is intellect added to object, and this addition has an anthropological value, in that it is man himself, his history, his situation, his freedom, and the very resistance which nature offers to his mind."

7. <u>The Garden of Adonis</u>. <u>op. cit</u>.

8. cf. Will Wright, <u>Sixguns and Society</u>. <u>op. cit</u>.

9. Claude Lévi-Strauss. <u>The Raw and the Cooked</u>. <u>op. cit</u>. 148; 333.

10. <u>idem</u>. The Story of Asdiwal <u>op. cit</u>. 13-14; 29; <u>The Raw and the Cooked</u>. 332.: "It would..be naive to suppose that there is always and in all circumstances a simple correlation between mythological imagery and social structure....often also it is not sufficiently taken into account that the mythological system is relatively autonomous when compared with the other manifestations of the life and thought of the group..."

11. cf. Randall Collins, <u>Conflict Sociology</u>. London. 1975; R.H. Brown, A Poetic for Sociology. Cambridge. 1976; Alvin Gouldner, <u>The Coming Crisis in Western Sociology</u>. New York. 1970; Anthony Giddens, <u>New Rules of Sociological Method</u>. London. 1976; Richard Bernstein, <u>The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory</u>. London. 1976.

12. cf. Norbert Elias, What is Sociology? London. 1978. p. 154;
     R.H. Brown, A Poetic for Sociology. Cambridge. 1976. Noam Chomsky,
     Language and Mind. op. cit. p. 26.; Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar,
     Laboratory Life. Beverley Hills and London. 1979. Edward Sapir,
     Language. op. cit. p. 89: "Yet distinctive analysis of the familiar
     is the only method of approach to an understanding of fundamentally
     different modes of expression."

13. see footnote 156 in Chapter 2, above.

14. A.J. Greimas, The Interpretation of Myth. op. cit. p. 87. cf. p. 91.

15. see especially Dan Sperber, Rethinking Symbolism. op. cit.

16. A.J. Greimas, Sémantique Structurale. op. cit. Ch. 2.

17. On reading and symptomatic reading see especially, Louis Althusser,
     For Marx. Harmondsworth. 1966, and especially Ben Brewster's glossary.

18. cf. Stuart Hall, Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse.
     op. cit. Umberto Eco, Towards a Semiotic Inquiry into the Television
     Message. op. cit.

19. Morphology of the Folktale. op. cit.

20. Gerald Prince, A Grammar of Stories. The Hague. 1973.

21. B.N. Colby, A Partial Grammar of Eskimo Folktales. American
     Anthropologist. 1973. Vol. 75. 645-662.

22. Sol Worth, The Development of a Semiotic of Film. Semiotica. 1.
     1969. 282-321; cf. also idem. and John Adair, Through Navajo Eyes.
     An Exploration in Film Communication and Anthropology. Bloomington.
     1972.

23. A.J. Greimas, Sémantique Structurale. op. cit.

24. Roland Barthes, Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits.
     op. cit.

25. B.N. Colby, op. cit. p. 661.

26. ibid. p. 651.

27. cf. André Martinet. Elements of General Linguistics. op. cit.

28. cf. also Seymour Chatman, Towards a Theory of Narrative. op. cit.

29. see above Chapter 2.

30. Umberto Eco, op. cit.: and idem. A Theory of Semiotics. op. cit.

31. The Story of Asdiwal in Edmund Leach (Ed.), The Structural Study
     of Myth and Totemism. op. cit.

32. op. cit.

33. The Interpretation of Myth. op. cit.

34. cf. G.S. Kirk, Myth. Its Meaning and Function. op. cit. p. 59.

35. cf. Paul Ricoeur, Structure et Hermeneutique. Esprit. (Nouvelle Série) Nov. 1963. 596-627.

36. G.S. Kirk. op. cit. 57-8. and footnote above.

37. The distinction between nature and culture is not however just the concern of the techno-economic code, but underlies many of the distinctions to be made within many different codes.

38. A.J. Greimas, Du Sens. op. cit. 157-182.

39. Kenneth Burke, esp. Grammar of Motives. New York. 1955. x-xvi.

40. This is a question of verisimilitude - and in film one of mise-en-scène - for a discussion of it in relation to literature see Jonathan Culler, Structuralist Poetics. op. cit. 137 ff.; and see Communications 11. 1968.

41. Seven Types of Ambiguity. op. cit.; Roman Jakobson, Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics, in Thomas A. Sebeok, Style in Language. New York and London. 1960. 350-377. p. 371: "Ambiguity is an intrinsic, inalienable character of any self-focussed message, briefly a corollary feature of poetry. Let us repeat with Empson: 'The machinations of ambiguity are among the very roots of poetry.' Not only the message but also its addresser and addressee become ambiguous."

42. cf. B.N. Colby, op. cit.; Vladimir Propp, The Morphology of the Folktale. op. cit. p. 75-78.

43. Marshall McLuhan, op. cit.

44. Roland Barthes, Writing Degree Zero. London. 1968.

45. A Theory of Semiotics. op. cit. p. 83.

46. ibid. p. 1.

47. The point is that any theoretical position can generate an interpretation which should (can) be internally coherent. The Freudians do this of course rather well. cf. Bruno Bettelheim, The Uses of Enchantment. London. 1976.

48. This raises for me a troubling question: if the analyses offered by Lévi-Strauss and others are the result of a mediation of the alien by the contemporary, the former may, rather than be 'understood' therefore, be 'contaminated'. If the structure of a myth is actually the structure of contemporary thought imposed on a myth, then no demonstration of its applicability to contemporary stories will have any significance whatsoever. On the other hand, logocentrism, or ethnocentrism writ large, is unavoidable; we are, at least in our sociology, all literate now.

49. Claude Lévi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology. Vol. 1. op. cit. p. 221.

50. In episode 3, indeed, the past becomes a transcendental helper, though personified in a whole range of atavistic figures.

51. A familiar theme in Marxism; see for example. Theodor Adorno
    and Max Horkheimer, op. cit.; Walter Benjamin, The Work of Art in
    the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. in Illuminations. London. 1973.

52. Thorsten Veblen, The Theory of the Leisure Class. New York. 1953
    (1899); Marshall Sahlins, Culture and Practical Reason, op. cit.;
    Charlotte Brunsdon and David Morley, op. cit.; Hannah Arendt, Society
    and Culture, in Norman Jacobs (Ed.), Culture for the Millions?.
    Boston. 1964. 43-52.

53. The linking of church, pub, hospital etc. is not as ambiguous as
    it may appear; each are locations in which cultural existence is
    transcended, broken through, as it were, in prayer, drink or
    sickness; each institution exists, contrary to marriage, to
    preserve some aspect of man's naturalness.

54. cf. Pierre Bourdieu, The Berber House. in Mary Douglas, Rules and
    Meanings. Harmondsworth. 1973. 98-110; Gaston Bachelard, A Poetic
    of Space. New York. 1969.; Clark E. Cunningham, Order and the
    Atoni House, in Rodney Needham (Ed.), Right and Left. Chicago.
    1973. 204-238; Marshall Sahlins, Culture and Practical Reason.
    op. cit. 32 ff.; S.J. Tambiah, Animals are good to think and good
    to prohibit. Ethnology. Vol. 8 No. 4. Oct. 1969. 424-59; Claude
    Lévi-Strauss, Tristes Tropiques. London. 1973. p. 123.

55. Arnold van Gennep, The Rites of Passage. op. cit.

56. cf. Roland Barthes, Système de la Mode. Paris. 1967. Petr Bogatyrev.
    The Function of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia. The Hague. 1971.;
    Marshall Sahlins, op. cit.

57. op. cit. p. 179 ff.

58. Bogatyrev op. cit. seems to push his analysis further however.

59. The problems, of course, begin with costume drama, and then this
    statement no longer holds so unequivocally.

60. from the O.E.D.

    Painter[1] (Paynter is a variant) 1. An artist who represents or depicts
    objects on a surface in colours; one who paints pictures. 2. A workman
    who coats or colours the surface of things (on woodwork, ironwork, etc.)
    with paint.

    Painter[2] (Paynter is a variant) 1. The rope or chain with which the shank
    and flukes of the anchor, when carried at the cathead, are confined to
    the ship's side. Now always shank-painter. 2. A rope attached to the
    bow of a boat, for making it fast to a ship, or a stake etc.

    Painter[3] Name in some parts of N. America for the American panther or
    cougar.

61. From Honey to Ashes. op. cit.

62. cf. Edmund Leach, Anthropological Aspects of Language; Animal
    Categories and Verbal Abuse. op. cit.

63. Jerrold Fodor and Jerry A. Katz, The Structure of a Semantic Theory. op. cit.

64. cf. Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge. op. cit. 25.

65. A.H. Halsey, Change in British Society. Oxford   .
    1978.

66. Richard Bates previous series for L.W.T. 'Helen, a Woman for Today' centred on the problems of young, married and childcaring womanhood.

CHAPTER VII

Television and Society

The argument is this. Television is a central cultural institution of our society. In its centrality it articulates the primary concerns of human existence and in ways which are themselves primary. These concerns, questions of life and death, of the familiar and the strange, of male and female, of nature and culture, are incorporated even into our own advanced culture through the messages that television communicates. The forms of that communication are themselves basic; they are simple and one supposes they are effective; they consist in the mythic narratives, part myth, part folktale, and in magic and ritual. Television is not sacred; nor is it profane in any strict sense of the term. But the emotions and the power of the sacred are preserved despite the secularisation of television's manifest content. Television's effectiveness consists in its ability to translate the unfamiliar into the familiar and to provide frameworks for making sense of the unintelligible. It articulates difference but preserves that difference. And while it transcends the boundary of the acceptable and the known and seeks continually to extend it, it nevertheless marks that boundary clearly and unambiguously. Within that boundary we are secure and through television we are always within it.

The boundary is both spatial and temporal. Both geography and history are in a certain sense annulled. Television is here, and it is now. Its images guarantee that and its content supports it. But it is its form, the logic of its narrative, which is the primary mechanism. And it is in its form that the continuity of culture,

its essential recursiveness, is preserved.[1]   This measure of

persistence needs, of course, to be understood in the context of

a society which in its own terms is rapidly changing and which

is visibly the site and source of conflict.   But its persistence

is not therefore to be only understood as false or alien or arbitrary.

Television's communication relates directly to the common sense

experience of everyday existence and the validity of that experience

is guaranteed by _its_ persistence.   The everyday world too, has its

boundaries and within them practical activity, economic, social,

political, symbolic is undertaken in the security of the familiar,

the predictable and the expectation of reciprocity.   The commonsense

world has its strategies but not solutions;   we learn to live with

contingency but do not transcend it.   Our language and behaviour

are premised on judgements of appropriateness and as J.L. Austin

acknowledges truth and falsity are no more than that.[2]

It is the language of television, in its restriction, which presents

and illuminates the coherence of the commonsense world and its

judgements of the appropriate.   The language of television, in

particular through its narrative structure, narrowly defines the range

of expression and the limits of response.   It is then, like all

ritual communication, an uneven dialogue - though not as some would

wish to argue, a monologue[3].   Participation is indirect, as is

its community, but both are present and fundamental in preserving

its culture.   And that culture, a folk culture, is created and

maintained as all folk cultures are, through the oral communication

of, by definition, ephemeral messages.   Television, pressured by

its own time and space, of schedule, of novelty and visibility,

presents its messages in irrecoverable and irreversible time.

But the recognition and the memory of these messages is guaranteed by the reversible time of its structure and by the accessibility of simple chronology.

Like commonsense, then, television translates history, political and social change, into manageable terms. For both, this translation is delayed and it is unquestioned. Marxism is correct. Television and commonsense do not enquire into why things should be as they are, only that they are so but have somehow to be lived with. It is tempting to ask on what other basis daily existence is possible - and television is indeed daily. But it is important to recognise that in this symbolic relationship with the everyday world television neither simply reflects nor defines, preserves nor changes what passes for commonsense knowledge and reflection. The relationship is a complex one and like the relationship between myth and the profane world in preliterate culture, its messages are neither distinct nor true to manifest experience.

Television is therefore, playful; it is both literally and metaphorically a game; but in its rule governed performance, the ending is both expected, pregiven and balanced.[4] In this it compares to ritual. Many of our games are accompanied by ritual; many of our rituals are games. Television presents, and is, both. In its eternal flow[5] and in its intention it aims at balance; an infinite pendulum of the positive and negative, approved and disapproved, expected and unexpected. In television the full range of human and not so human possibility is presented - only to be denied; a denial precisely by virtue of its presentation on television. Our heroes and anti-heroes have enough of us in them for us to recognise our identity[6] but by their appearance on that screen, within the frame, that identity becomes estranged and in a

sense more attractive.   In any event, like in myth, nothing in television is possible even though it is real;   nothing is real even though it is possible.

Television then needs to be taken seriously[7].   It is not an aberration of twentieth century society, an excresence, or an irrelevance.   It is, in its present form, which may not be its necessary form, the preeminent medium of centralised communication. It would be naive to suggest that it is the medium through which society communes with itself, for of course that society is neither homogenous nor free from conflict and contradiction.   In it certain groups have access to the content of television and others are excluded, but the significance of this situation is perhaps not as obvious as it may seem and I will return to it.

II

In this context, what of the entirely modest contribution that the analysis of Intimate Strangers purports to be?   Television drama takes up a substantial proportion of programme time and a drama series a substantial proportion of that.   Drama,while not necessarily representative is certainly typical, and no television day goes by without its appearance, particularly in the afternoon.   But despite this, the analysis of Intimate Strangers constitutes in no way a proof of the arguments offered about television here and in the rest of the thesis.   Such a demonstration would need, were it ever to be possible, an altogether   more comprehensive range of analysis.   What it does do, I hope, is offer an illustration of the argument and make the formulation of hypotheses about television potentially more precise.

This enquiry has begun, and in a way, ended with a study of television's narrative structure. Such a structure gives any particular text, a programme in this case, its coherence and its identity. The levels at which it works seem significant: on the one hand its chronologic , the movement from beginning to end; on the other its logic, the synchronic pattern of system rather than text specific elements. The former reflects the structure of the folktale, the latter that of myth, though as I have argued there is no absolute distinction between the two, and most traditional oral texts are, like those on television, a mixture of both.

The narrative of Intimate Strangers would appear to be paradigmatic. There clearly is a coherent narrative chronologic and that chronologic seems to be accessible through the model of the folktale that Vladimir Propp and others present, but even in terms of an analysis which is less precise in its specification the folkloric quality of these programmes is obvious. A. Olrik's stipulation of the basic elements within the folktale has already been referred to; in it he suggests that a folktale consists of nine characteristics:[8] the beginning of a folktale is gentle and rarely the most important part of the tale; likewise the story extends beyond the climax until it reaches a point of equilibrium or stability; the story itself is full of repetition, often three fold, which is used to give it body. The number of people involved is also limited; rarely more than two are present in a scene at one time, and rarely active at the same time. Those that are, are often contrary, antagonistic to each other; the weakest will often turn out to be the strongest; the youngest often triumphs over the oldest. If two people appear in the same role they are presented as small and weak. But in any case both characterisation and plot structure is simple: "Only

such qualities as directly effect the story are mentioned; no

clue is given that the persons in the tale have any real life

outside."[9] In every degree the folktale is a simple story,

therefore extraneous detail, and variety for variety's sake,

are excluded in an attempt to make the text as concentrated as

possible.

In Intimate Strangers most of these elements find their place.

The story indeed begins with a scene setting and ends with a perfect

image of balance. There is much repetition, one episode after

another fulfilling similar functions, and different characters,

particularly the helpers or potential helpers following one another

with consistent regularity and with often minimal narrative effect.

The number and range of characters is limited, though perhaps not

so much when compared with classic folktales, but the action is

certainly centred on the hero who in this case appears in three

manifestations, - Harry, Joan and the two of them together. Rarely,

if ever, are one or the other of them out of shot. Other characters

come and go, like thieves in the night; they are of no consequence

in themselves, only means to /an end, and are quickly forgotten. Harry,

too, named but still Everyman, by virtue of his initial misfortune,

has to triumph over adversity; and Joan too, by virtue, as it were,

of Harry's success, also suffers before the eventual triumph. These

are the common folk, and they are fighting an unnamed adversary.

Who then is the villain in Intimate Strangers? Why is he absent?

The series, quite obviously, is not one of manifest conflict and

physical violence. Villainy is not the prerogative of any one

character, and the drama is therefore diffuse. The conflict has

been internalised and generalised. In a sense one can say that

no one is to blame for Harry's misfortune and no one will really

help him except himself. And this is the bourgeois message of

independence in the face of unnamed and in any case ultimately

irrelevant forces of society and history which Roland Barthes for

example, sees at the heart of the culture of contemporary capitalism.[10]

Equally however, Harry's struggle is with society - a society which

has excluded him by virtue of his triple lack; the message here is

of one of discomfort, alienation perhaps, felt by those excluded

and the choice is one that A.J. Greimas argues is essential to the

Russian folktale, that between individual freedom and social

respectability[11] .   The irony, of course is that Harry's bid for

freedom - 'to be his own man' (episode 6 and 7) - leads with the

directness of a bullet straight to the heart of social acceptability.

In chapter 5 I suggested that the villain was fate, disembodied,

beyond control, beyond history; it was chance, 'just one of those

things', which brings Harry to his knees at the end of episode 1

and which inaugurates the narrative.   Chance too, as Max Horkheimer

and Theodor Adorno argue [12] has its part to play in bourgeois

culture - though as they fail to see, no more nor less, than in

any other.   In fact it is not chance, or not at least just chance,

which generates the impetus for the story of Intimate Strangers,

but it is a particular form of imbalance or extreme; Harry is

working too hard; his involvement in the City takes him too far

- beyond culture, to where culture becomes nature once again and

is uncontrollable.   It is the folktale's task to resolve that

imbalance and to generate through its narrative progress not just

the redemption of the initial lack or villainy but through that,

the presentation of an ideal equilibrium.   This much, at least,

is what the chronologic effects.   The Lévi-Straussian formula,
             ian
the Greimas/canonic structure are statements of just this, as is

implicitly Propp's function W, the Wedding, and as such this drive

for balance is as much a part of the myth as of the folktale.[13]

However, in the analysis presented in the thesis, the mythic
narrative transcends the simple chronologic of the folktale. It
breaks out of the presence of the text in two directions; firstly
towards the society that acts as host to it and secondly towards
the structure of mythic expression which has a much wider spatial
and temporal relevance. Both movements are united in the concrete
logic which is thereby no longer seen as being the exclusive
prerogative of preliterate society.

I referred to the arguments of Marshall Sahlins in the introductory
chapter.[14] In advocating a pensée bourgeoise, he suggested that
the way it was expressed was no less in terms of a logic of felt
and lived categories as was any in primitive society. For him the
significance of such an observation and indeed such a demonstration
in the case of food and fashion, was to establish both a common
logic and a distinct content within contemporary culture. This,
indeed, is also my intention, and the narrative of Intimate Strangers
supports it. It is a visible logic of place, sex and work through
which the dilemmas of the strange, the contradictory and the appropriate
are worked through, although in Intimate Strangers one set of cultural
categories seem dominant - that between the country and the city.[15]
The characters which play within these categories are of course,
perfectly contemporary, their actions limited by what in the world of
lived relations they would be. But in the compression of the play
that world becomes mythic; its concreteness suffused and defined
by its eternal logic.

The analysis in chapter 6 has perhaps not been pursued far enough.
To do so would be an enormous task,[16] and would in any case need
to take account not just of other television series, but of the
manifestations of the codes of contemporary culture in other media.

Indeed, in order to make some sense of the little I have, I have had to assume much about the world at large. The result is a series of simple and, in effect, over-determined structures. At the level at which I have chosen to explore the texts there appears a world and a logic of remarkable simplicity. It neither seems to present the extraordinary complexity of American myth nor for example the sensitivity to space and time which the Kabyle and Berber appear to show in their practice, both mythic and profane.[17] It is tempting to say either that the method itself is blinding, or that there is a deterioration of mythic structure in contemporary society, or that one text is not sufficient to suggest the full vitality of the system as a whole.[18] I suppose that all three are partially correct though I am more inclined to suggest that the simple structure portrays a simple text and secondly that a simple text is only one among many in whose unity a more complex structure will be at work. Indeed the category of church (pub, hospital etc.) is one which is remarkably underpresented and under-developed in the series. Given a wider range of texts, it and the other structural units could be further broken down in a way similar to the one suggested for the domestic geography. In such a way and in the acknowledgement that each category will appear in more than one structural arrangement, then the structure as a whole will grow like a crystal, endlessly.

III

Can the function of television be discussed? It is in many ways difficult to do so. The history of studies of the mass media, particularly film, radio and television have been dominated by a concern with effect and with function.[19] Current research can add to the basic stimulus and response model notions of two-step flow and gatekeepers, uses and

gratifications in the communication of a message; and in the
in what channel
awareness that 'who says what/to whom, model' is mediated by a

culture and society whose complexity diffuses the previously

assumed potency of the syringe.[20] But despite this the direct

influence of television on action, particularly on the action of

children and adolescents is still a cause of academic and more

broadly social concern.[21]

It would be fair to say that Denis McQuail's conclusion in 1969

still holds:

> "The assumption of great persuasive power of the mass
> media must be severely qualified. There is almost no
> evidence of the production of apathy or passivity by
> the mass media, nor of effects harmful to sociability
> and family life or likely to stimulate crime and violence.
> The assumption of unmediated contact between mass
> communicators and the individual has largely been
> demolished along with the image of an individualised
> and anomic audience situation."[22]

The mass media are therefore functional, as Paul Lazarsfeld noted

as long ago as 1948.[23] They offer no serious challenge to the

dominant institutions of society and overall tend to support the

status quo. None of this is intuitively surprising, and so the

question no longer becomes why or what, but how. And it is here

the problems begin. The search for answers has lead to a greater

concern with the messages themselves and with the desire to relate

the analysis of particular communicated texts to a theory of

culture or ideology which will make sense of them.[24] This is

indeed the intention of this study, though in a sense still at one

remove, for the notion of function however difficult it is to avoid,

is still in many ways an insubstantial one. It assumes coherence,

normality and consensus. It takes its measure from the persistence

of institutions and while this has a certain validity (societies do

cohere, action is norm governed, there is a degree of consensus,

institutions persist), there is much in society, quite obviously,

that is not like this.

Indeed, television, among the other mass media, is often given an

analogous position to some functionalist theories in sociology;

that it masks and mistakes the reality of the real world and

generates by so doing, an atmosphere of misplaced and unjust

security.[25]   The correlation of television and the mythic does

not, of itself, make the position much easier to resolve.

J.S.R. Goodlad [26] for example, in his discussion of popular drama,

takes the functionalist position with regard to both myth and drama

much to heart; myth and ritual have cognitive, expressive and

instrumental functions; they inform the members of a community

about its social structure, they act as tension releases, they help

to exercise social control, and they accurately reflect the real

life experience of the community.   Drama in general, and television

drama in particular, does likewise; it 'draws attention to the

social order by contrasting it with disorder, to a morality by

contrasting it with immorality; it reinforces prevailing popular

opinion and reflects norms; it is unlikely to be dysfunctional

either in terms of its specific effects or in general narcotically;

even escape, in so far as it is a valid category, is positive;

it functions as a social lubricant'.[27]   Once again this seems

both trivial and obvious on the one hand and   empirically

undemonstrable on the other.   Just as there are myths and folktales

which might appear to have no function, or to be positively antagonistic

to existing structural arrangements, and Jack Zipes for example argues

that the European folktales of feudal society were at least potentially

a spur to rebellious action,[28] so too can one refer to television

programmes, drama in particular, which might also be similarly

excluded.   They are, admittedly, few.[29]

No; as Max Weber admonishes, such arguments as these are of orientational use only.[30] One has to look at the mechanisms within the texts and to the relationship between institutions; one has to examine the ways in which meanings are generated and transmitted and to look at the symbolic structure of social existence.

I have, in the preceding chapters, suggested one way of proceeding. Much can be gained by an examination of the texts themselves and their structure. The nature of television's communication is restricted, and as such it both depends on and creates an audience of a particular kind; of course, composed of different individuals, with different needs and likely to respond differently, uniquely, to the messages they receive; but by the same token united through the reception of that message. This is the new folk, or rather by virtue of the persistence of the messages and in the way they are expressed, a resurgence of the folk. Television creates a national parochiality; traditional forms of sub-cultural experience and expression, the culture of the declining rural population of industrial societies, is on the one hand being destroyed by television, but on the other it is being preserved. Everything but the content remains and what is more it is no longer restricted to particular groups, but pertains and is relevant to the society as a whole.

At this point, loud screams come from stage left:

> 'Structuralism is the <u>thought guaranteed by the State</u> which thinks the present conditions of spectacular 'communication' as an absolute. Its method of studying the code of messages is itself nothing but the product, and the recognition, of a society where communication exists in the form of a cascade of hierarchic signals. Consequently it is not Structuralism which serves to prove the transhistorical validity of the society of the spectacle; it is on the contrary the society of the spectacle imposing itself as massive reality which serves to prove the cold dream of Structuralism.'[31]

Perhaps. It is certainly the <u>illusion</u> of the common interest which since Marx and Engels[32] has been central to an understanding of myth

and ideology. And if even for Ernst Cassirer [33] myth seems to roll

up everything it touches into a unity, so to for Roland Barthes, this

is also true of bourgeois ideology and its manifestations in mass

mediated communication;

> "Statistically, myth is on the right. There, it is essential;
> well-fed, sleek, expansive, garrulous, it invents itself
> ceaselessly. It takes hold of everything, all aspects of
> the law, of morality, of aesthetics, of diplomacy, of
> household equipment, of Literature, of entertainment.
> Its expansion has the very dimensions of bourgeois
> ex-nomination. The bourgeoisie wants to keep reality
> without keeping the appearances; it is therefore the
> very negativity of bourgeois appearance, infinite like
> every negativity, which solicits myth infinitely." [34]

For Barthes, of course, contemporary culture and its products are

functional, and though he and Guy Debord, more spectacularly, see

the continuity of myth, they nevertheless do not see its inevitability.

That is the illusion; just as much as function is illusion if it is

presumed to be necessary. Both I and Debord see contemporary culture

as earthily transcendent; what distinguishes us is simply that what

seems as a reasonable observation to me becomes the centre of his

thunderous recriminations.

The issue, however, is a serious one and it needs more careful

consideration. It consists, it seems to me, in two related aspects;

firstly the question of the relationship between history and structure;

and secondly that between ideology and culture. I can only give a

few observations on both now.

IV

> "...in each of us, in varying proportions, there is part of
> yesterday's man; it is yesterday's man who inevitably predominates
> in us, since the present amounts to little compared with the
> long past in the course of which we were formed and from which
> we result. Yet, we do not sense this man of the past, because
> he is inveterate in us; he makes up the unconscious part of
> ourselves. Consequently we are led to take no account of
> him, any more than we take account of his legitimate demands.
> Conversely, we are very much aware of the most recent attainments
> of civilization, because, being recent, they have not yet had
> time to settle in our own unconscious." [35]

I discussed very briefly, in the opening chapter, that blindness which contemporary culture has to its own persistences and continuities, and I suggested that it was perhaps part of our own ideology to make change into something of a fetish. Indeed it is, but such an observation only makes an understanding of the perception of change even more difficult. What Emile Durkheim is suggesting above is that it is only immediate change, present history as it were, that is visible. Past history, the residue of previous experience and previous social change is buried in the unconscious.[36] It is incorporated into our culture and constrains our action, perhaps through that incorporation. In a very real sense the everyday world is innocent of history, rather than blind to it.

And it is this, its coherence which makes the commonsense world as it is and correlatively which makes television its extension, its mouthpiece and its support. Television, however, dramatises innocence. History, both present and past, becomes visible but transposed. If all history is a rewriting, a narrative whose story ends with us[37] and which we believe accordingly, then television is, in contemporary society, a major contributor to that rewriting.

In its rewriting, television, like myth, reissues the basic principles of classification. The history of historians is a chronology, in which events are linked through cause and effect and which are connected through time. For Lévi-Strauss that history is the 'myth' of contemporary societies, the fundamental principle of intellectual and institutional development. In this, contemporary societies - he calls them hot - differ fundamentally from those which seek by the institutions they give themselves, to annul the possible effects of historical factors on their equilibrium and continuity. Historical time in

primitive societies is replaced by a real time which is cyclical,

passive and sacred.

> "Mythical history thus presents the paradox of being both
> disjoined from and conjoined with the present. It is
> disjoined from it because the original ancestors were
> of a nature different from contemporary men; they were
> creators and these are imitators. It is conjoined with
> it because nothing has been going on since the appearance
> of the ancestors except events whose recurrence periodically
> effaces their particularity."(38)

The question then, is not so much whether this constitutes a mis-

interpretation of the primitive (for in part it must be), but whether

and with what effect, such a sacred history does, or should disappear

with literacy, technology, and class conflict. In a recent study of

the Western, Will Wright argues that it does not;(39) history has

replaced totemism as a classificatory system, and it has replaced myth

as a mode of explanation of society. It has not, however, and

probably cannot, replace myth as a ground for ordinary social actions;

and for this reason modern myths are as structurally complicated and as

socially important as the myths of primitive societies. I am inclined

to agree. It is the everyday world, the world of core values(40)

and beliefs, the heart and generator of all that is sacred in society,

which is relatively untouched by history. And everyday experience is

still dominated, as it must be, by the cycle of days and weeks and years;

not generally by evolution or cataclysm (or even cause and effect).

It is not to say that the everyday world is without vision or memory;

indeed it sees further, and remembers more than the specialist or the

scholar allows. And it does so with one purpose in mind, its own

maintenance.

The commonsense world is then a translation of history through structure

into action. It is neither langue nor parole, but like myth in

Lévi-Strauss's formulation, in its metalanguage, it is both at once.

And mythic narrative is similarly formed; the final text is itself the product of the mutual constraints of history and structure; of present and past events rewritten to satisfy curiosity and emotion.

The reworking of history which television undertakes, and of which it is an expression, is a strategy for the repression of uncertainty and change. But it is a necessary strategy and not as Roland Barthes would have it an aspect of the 'irresponsibility of man'[41] '...Bourgeois ideology continually transforms the products of history into essential types. Just as the cuttlefish squirts its ink in order to protect itself, it cannot rest until it has obscured the ceaseless making of the world, fixated this world into an object which can be for ever possessed, catalogued its riches, embalmed it, and injected into reality some purifying essence which will stop its transformation, its flight towards other forms of existence.'[42] It seems perverse to suggest that it is the peculiar facilitiy of bourgeois ideology to grapple with reality in this way, as if the existence of classes and their endemic conflict in some way calls the lie to the consistency (and the inevitability) of such attempts. Class may be the right world but it is, by itself, the wrong measure.

Despite the obvious connection between the institutions of the mass media and political structure of society,[43] a connection which has economic, administrative and symbolic dimensions, an understanding of these institutions and of their products can not be vouchsafed to the many analyses which deny a full contribution to the continuities in human existence. If my argument seems to err in the other direction then it must be understood in this context.

Television, in its rearticulation of a folk culture is not therefore ideologically neutral - I'll come to that in a moment - and it does confirm the present. The present consists in community, though not a community of course, geographically united.[44] Time and place are homogenised at one remove - mediated by television and common by virtue of television. But this community,both product and producer of television, has by virtue of the consistency and the constraint of core culture a genuineness no less for its mediation. The viability of contemporary culture and as it were the guarantee of the effectiveness of television's messages, is to be found in the nearly visible structure of the mythic. Through these structures, of narration and of ritual passage, all of us who watch television participate in a common and transcendent experience, though the notion of transcendence must be understood in a particular way. We need not be in a state of ecstasy for example. It is transcendent because through television we are involved in a double perceptual movement; the strange, the different, is made familiar as I have often noted; but also the familiarity of our everyday existence is made strange. And it is transcendent because the processes by which this occurs unites it with identical processes in the societies and cultures of whom we have very little knowledge. The structures of the communication in television and in commonsense have therefore their own vitality and their own meaning. Through them the particularity of our historical experience is made intelligible to us, and through it, through all the various manifestations of the mythic, folktale, song, proverb, play and ritual, we live it.

In this sense therefore television does not deny history or naturalise it, but makes it bearable. And not just history, but the whole range of life experiences, in their contradictions and their uncertainties, which in fact make up the 'history' of individuals in society. In

the exchange of meanings, an exchange contained but also made

possible by these persistent structures, the individual is

integrated into the social world.[45]   And what is more that

social world, the place of that integration, is itself reproduced.[46]

But that social world is no longer, if it ever was, a homogeneous

consensual world of identity of interest and community of belief.

And if television in the content and structure of its messages

assumes or gives the impression that it is just such a world then

it must become suspect.   However, even in such a bland statement,

a hornet's nest has been released.   Let me quote illustratively,

from the introduction to a recent reader to the field of mass

communication studies:

> 'The central concern of this Reader/is with whole societies,
> their class structure and forms of class dominance and an
> exploration of the role of the media as ideological and
> signifying agencies within that whole.   The concept of
> ideology is, therefore, of central concern.   We would
> argue that dominant ideologies do not necessarily crudely
> and simply represent the interests of the ruling class but
> they always constitute the whole view of the world.   As
> Hall suggests, "ideologies are one of the principal
> mechanisms which expand and amplify the dominance of
> certain class interests into a hegemonic formation" (Hall
> 1974 p.270).   Most importantly, dominant ideologies are
> not mere reflections of the social conditions of a dominant
> class but represent the political relationship between the
> dominant and subordinated classed in a specific social formation.'[47]

To quarrel with such an assessment is to quarrel not just with a

particular expression of historical materialism but is in a sense to

quarrel with historical materialism _per se_.   And although this thesis

is implicitly just such a quarrel, the relationship between the two

forms of argument needs, perhaps, a little further consideration.

As I suggested in the introductory chapter the site of such a quarrel

can be defined by the relationship between ideology and culture.

A number of elementary observations can profitably be made. First
of all ideology is reflective whereas culture is constitutive.[48]
This distinction is, of course, an articulation of the materialism -
idealism dichotomy; ideology is seen as being those values and
beliefs and forms of expression which are determined, albeit in the
last instance, by the economic and material forces of society and
as such ideological forms therefore reflect the interests of those,
who by virtue of their position in the economic and material structure
of society, have most to gain by it. Culture, on the other hand,
is seen as the precondition, in the realm of values and beliefs, of
any activity in the world, including economic and material. Indeed,
in an evolutionary model, such as that of Talcott Parsons,[49]
culture which is at the top of the cybernetic hierarchy gains its
determining strength as societies become more complex and move away
in their economic, social and political security from the limitation
of having to satisfy basic survival needs. Culture is seen as
superorganic[50] as an operator[51] as praxis[52] as instrumental[53]
by those of otherwise very different persuasions who argue for a
clear notion of culture.

Culture and ideology are also distinguished by their truth.[54]
Ideologies are false; they are false when measured against the
reality of the world as it manifests itself in 'class, power,
exploitation and interest'.[55] Ideologies present the world in
'camera obscura'[56] distorting, mystifying, manipulating, imaginary.[57]
The great challenge for a critique of contemporary, bourgeois society,
is that unmasking which consists in the revelation of the noncoincidence
between idea and reality and this holds even in the acknowledgement that
ideology itself may be the site of contradiction and conflict.[58]

The notion of cultu-- avoids such a measurement. The question of truth does not arise, for in language or in symbol all meaning is a construction;[59] and through that construction a world is created. All worlds are equivalent; and there is nothing objectively outside them. Or perhaps more accurately, the truth can consist either in the acknowledgement of the relativity of and in culture, or in the search for something approaching a universal logic or grammar.[60]

The third dimension relates to the historical and spatial specificity of ideology and ideological formations. Even in the most advanced formulations, ideology consists in the manifestation of interest of a particular class in a particular society. And even in the acknowledgement of lag, as social structure changes so does ideology, in its dependence. It is this to which Louis Althusser refers when he argues, following Marx and Engels in The German Ideology that ideology, despite its specificity, has no independent history.

> 'Ideology, then, is for Marx an imaginary assemblage (bricolage), a pure dream, empty and vain, constituted by the 'day's residues' from the only full and positive reality, that of the concrete history of concrete material individuals materially producing their existence. It is on this basis that ideology has no history in the German Ideology since its history is outside it, where the only existing history is the history of concrete individuals.'[61]

Culture is in a certain sense also outside history, and Althusser's distinction between ideologies, specific forms of ideology, and the generic concept of ideology, mirrors the distinction I wish to draw between ideology and culture. Culture is something that all men produce by virtue of their humanity: symbolic and material, it consists in the carving out of an order from nature, and in the preservation of that order against the exigencies of nature and other culture. It is, more or less, systemic; and it is, as I have said, what unites man rather than what divides him. Those who study culture tend towards considerations of the universal. Those who study ideology, Althusser perhaps apart, tend towards the concrete, the historical and the specific. For these the universal is itself an ideological category.

In their explanation, ideology and culture also differ. The
study of ideology, quite obviously now, involves a reduction,
though in a particular direction, and perhaps in the last instance,
to the material structure and productive forces of society.[62]
Ideas, beliefs and values are always dependent on, and in a
significant degree determined by, the base; a study of ideology,
of, in capitalism, the culture of the bourgeoisie, must always
leave the realm of ideas for a more firm footing.

Those who study culture can equally be involved in a reduction;
through the analysis of symbolic coherence, of structure and of
pattern, the semiologists and structuralists reduce the manifest
complexity of belief and action to an abstraction. For them, as
for Karl Popper,[63] in his notion of World 111, culture has an
autonomy and a significant independence from material forces. This
is sufficient, at least centrally, for them to ignore culture's
relationship with, and dependence on, the equal complexity of
social relations.

If ideology is bourgeois, as it is tautologically, in a Marxist
view of contemporary culture, that culture is elsewhere open to
many other forms of classification: mass, popular, elite;
professional, applied and amateur; refined, mediocre, brutal;
traditional and modern, and so on.[64]

Finally, and correlatively, ideologies are about power.[65] In
its reflection and in its preservation an ideology is a manifesta-

tion of a society of social, economic and political inequality.

The notion of hegemony introduced and discussed by Antonio

Gramsci is central to this perception of ideology.[66]   Gwyn A.

Williams summarizes it in this way:

> 'By hegemony, Gramsci seems to mean a socio-political
> situation, in his terminology a 'moment', in which the
> philosophy and practice of a society fuse and are in
> equilibrium; an order in which a certain way of life and
> thought is dominant, in which one concept of reality is
> diffused throughout society in all its institutional
> and private manifestations, informing with its spirit all
> taste, morality, customs, religion and political principles,
> and all social relations particularly in their intellectual
> and moral connotation. An element of direction and
> control, not necessarily conscious, is implied. This
> hegemony corresponds to state power conceived in strict
> Marxist terms in the dictatorship of a class.'[67]

The notion of hegemony, which in its cultural dimension is akin

to a Marxian conscience collective - a blanketing culture in which

all individuals (in their identity) find their representations and

touchstones ready to hand, and which in its political dimension,

has much in common with Max Weber's discussion of authority, and

the central significance of the mechanisms involved in the creation

and preservation of legitimation; this notion of hegemony has been,

despite its difficulty, of great influence in contemporary Marxist

studies, and the distinction between hegemony and domination seems

to be reflected in Althusser's own distinction between repressive

state apparatus and ideological state apparatus.[68]   The notion

of hegemony, also, it would appear, is the source of the notion of

the relatively autonomous, wherein various levels of social

experience, (formations), most significantly the ideological,

are conceived of as being sufficient unto themselves, though still

to be understood, finally, in the framework of a much mediated

economy and a much weakened impression of the class structure.

Ideology is, in the notion of hegemony, that dimension of
culture which is political and which has political significance.
Not all culture, however, is political (not all politics is
cultured), and we could well do here with the equivalent of Max
Weber's discrimination in the realm of the economic, between the
economically determined, the economically relevant and the
economic.[69] Clearly the reduction of contemporary culture to
the ideological in this sense is a mistake. On the other hand,
not so to reduce it, inevitably brings with it all the problems
faced currently in the sociology of knowledge, within and without
Marxism.

The following statement from Stuart Hall is only meaningful if
it is assumed that culture and ideology are in essence, the same,
and that political culture is the site of the albeit leaky,
domination of one world view by another: 'the overall intention
of "effective communication" must, certainly, be to "win the
consent" of the audience to the preferred reading, and hence to
get him to decode within the hegemonic framework. Even when
decodings are not made, through a "perfect transmission", within
the hegemonic framework, the great range of decodings will tend
to be negotiations within the dominant codes - giving them a
more situational inflexion - rather than systematically decoding
them in a counter - hegemonic way.'[70]

We can grant that there is no guarantee in the communication of
any message that it will be received in the intended way and we
can grant also that the nature of the codes of a particular
message will restrict the nature of the response, indeed I have
already argued as much, but we do not need to accept that there

is such a thing as an unambiguous preferred reading or that the

effect of a mass communicated message is necessarily skewed in

favour of the producer of that message.[71]

The television message, in this case, is not necessarily then, the

site of a collision of competing definitions of reality, or in its

capacity to exclude, the site of a triumph over the alternative

or the unacceptable. It is rather the site of a collusion and

that between the demands of the moment expressed through a given

political structure and the demands of the persistent expressed

through the culture as a whole. The former, in a real sense, is

dependent on the latter.

Narrative provides the motor for this blending and articulation.

Through narrative and in particular through the mythic narratives

I have been discussing in this thesis, the possibility for effective

ideological communication is dependent on the presence and pre-

existence of other, perhaps universal, forms of communication. What

is more, this communication, the communication through structure

and affect, which is restricted in its codes, could well betray

rather than only modestly support the messages that are transmitted

on its back.

Participation in the culture of television, a participation in which

we are all involved, involves us, in turn, in a folk culture which

is the very reverse of the one which has up to now supported the

dominant institutions of our society. The crisis of capitalism;

sometimes seen in terms of a withdrawal of legitimation,[72] can in

part be understood as the result of the resurgence, through television,

of the oral and mythic - a resurgence which transforms the sig-
nificance of everyday experience and in a sense universalises it.

The translation of particular and specialist types of knowledge,
just as the presentation of the novel and the extraordinary in a
familiar form, may well involve, among those who receive its message,
both challenge and withdrawal. In television and in its narratives,
culture comes to the people, but in a way which both transforms
that culture and establishes popular authority over it. The forms
of that transformation are those that have persisted by virtue of
a persistence of core culture, of a limited range of solutions to
identical problems expressed directly and ephemerally. The re-
assertion of these forms must alter the balance in political and
social structure and make the dominance of, and by, the literary
harder to achieve. Rather than be a blindfold for the uninitiated,
television, in its contribution to culture, may make its novitiates
progressively less easy to govern; the forms of its perceptual
order contradicting rather than supporting the values of its
supposed controllers. Beneath the manifestation of ideology,
with its stress towards the maintenance of the status quo, lies the
hidden myth, which in the communication of its narratives, undermines
it. That the source of this challenge is in the deepest sense
cultural makes it no less significant.

Chapter 7. Footnotes and References

1. Daniel Bell, The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism. London.
   1976. p. 105-6.

2. J.L. Austin, How to do Things with Words. Oxford. 1962. 147-8.

3. see for example Phillip Elliot, The Making of a Television Series.
   London. 1972. p. 164. Elliot suggests that the paradox of mass
   communications is that it does not communicate.

4. cf. Claude Lévi-Strauss, The Savage Mind. op. cit. p. 30: "All
   games are defined by a set of rules which in practice allow the
   playing of any number of matches. Ritual which is also 'played'
   is on the other hand, like a favoured instance of a game, remembered
   from among the possible ones because it is the only one which results
   in a particular type of equilibrium between the two sides. The
   transposition is readily seen in the case of the Gohuku Gama of New
   Guinea, who have learnt football but who will play, several days
   running, as many matches as are necessary for both sides to reach
   the same score. (Read 429). This is treating a game as a ritual.
   (Reference to K.E. Read, Leadership and Consensus in a New Guinea
   Society. American Anthropologist. 61. No. 3. 1959.); Johan Huizinga,
   Homo Ludens. op. cit.

5. Raymond Williams, Television, Technology and Cultural Form. op. cit.

6. cf. Donald Horton and Richard R. Wohl, Mass Communication and
   Parasocial Interaction. Psychiatry. XIX August 1956. Vol. 3.
   215-229; Edgar Morin, The Stars. New York. 1960.

7. It is, of course, though not always without a good measure of
   hysteria; see for example some of the papers in Bernard Rosenberg
   and David Manning White, Mass Culture. The Popular Arts in America.
   New York. 1957.

8. Quoted in Stith Thompson, The Folktale. op. cit. p. 456.

9. ibid.

10. Roland Barthes, Mythologies. op. cit.

11. A.J. Greimas, Sémantique Structurale. op. cit. p. 210: "Dans le
    contèxte du conte populaire russe, cette contradiction mythique peut
    être formulée de la façon suivante: la liberté individualle a pour
    corollaire l'aliénation; le réintégration des valeurs doit être
    payée par une instauration de l'ordre, c'est-à-dire le rénoncement
    à cette liberté."

12. Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, The Culture Industry: Enlighten-
    ment as Mass Deception, in idem., Dialectic of Enlightenment. op. cit.
    120-167. p. 146; see also T.W. Adorno, Television and the Patterns
    of Mass Culture. in Bernard Rosenberg and David Manning White, op. cit.
    p. 478-488.

13. see Chapter 4 above.

14. Marshall Sahlins, Culture and Practical Reason. op. cit.

15. cf. Raymond Williams, The Country and the City. London. 1973.
    Petr. Bogatyrev, The Functions of Folk Costume in Moravian Slovakia.

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op. cit. p. 94: "When a change in the economic system brought about a change in costume, it did not eliminate the opposition of village versus city; that opposition sought new ways of expressing itself and found them in the forms of the new styles."

16. It is indeed a beginning only. Further work not just on drama but on the narrative structure (broadly conceived) of documentary, and also on the relationship between the post-literate oral culture of television and the proliterate oral culture of societies that often have television foisted on them would be ways of extending the range of questions and deepening some of the answers.

17. Pierre Bourdieu, The Berber House. op. cit.; and idem, Outline of a Theory of Practice. Cambridge. 1977.

18. cf. Varda Leymore, Hidden Myth. London. 1974. p. 154: "That advertising structure is simpler than that of myth is but a reflection of the fact that advertising is a degenerated form of myth. For one thing it is poorer in detail, and for another it lacks, particularly in static advertising, the temporal dimension. cf. Lévi-Strauss, The Origin of Table Manners. op. cit. p. 129-131.

19. See footnote 2, Chapter 1.

20. ibid.

21. ibid.

22. Dennis McQuail. Towards a Sociology of Mass Communication. London. . 1969. p. 35.

23. Paul Lazarsfeld, Mass Communication, Popular Taste and Organised Social Action. in W. Schramm, Mass Communication. 2nd. Edition Urbana . 1960. 491-512.

24. cf. Will Wright. Sixguns and Society. op. cit.; John Fiske and John Hartley. Reading Television. op. cit.; Charlotte Brunsden and David Morley. op. cit. and Stuart Hall, Ian Connell, Lidia Curti, op. cit.

25. Roland Barthes, Mythologies. op. cit.; see also Stuart Hall, Culture, The Media and the Ideological Effect. op. cit.

26. J.S.R. Goodlad, A Sociology of Popular Drama. London. 1971. see also idem. On the Social Significance of Television Comedy, in C.W.E. Bigsby, Approaches to Popular Culture. London. 1976. 213-226; Approaches to Popular Drama through the Social Sciences. in David Mayer and Kenneth Richard (Eds.), Western Popular Theatre. London. 1977. 239-255; Albert McLean Jr. American Vaudeville as Ritual. University of Kentucky Press. 1965.

27. A Sociology of Popular Drama. op. cit. p. 190.

28. Jack Zipes, Breaking the Magic Spell. op. cit.

29. Cathy Come Home is the classic and perhaps almost a unique example.

30. Max Weber, Economy and Society. Vol. 1. New York.
    1969. 12-13.

31. Guy Débord, Society of the Spectacle. A Black and Red Translation.
    Unauthorised. Detroit 1970. 2nd Printing. 1973. para 202.
    (revised translation. Practical Paradise Productions. 1977)

32. The German Ideology. op. cit. 66.

33. Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms. Vol. 2. op. cit.

34. Mythologies. op. cit. 148.

35. Emile Durkheim, L'évolution pédagogique en France. Alcan 1938.
    p. 16. quoted by Pierre Bourdieu, Outline of a Theory of Practice.
    op. cit. p. 79.

36. see Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of
    Reality. op. cit. 185.; Nicholas Abercrombie and Bryan Turner.
    The Dominant Ideology. The British Journal of Sociology. No. 2.
    June 1978. 149-170. p. 152.

37. W.B. Gallie, Philosophy and the Historical Understanding. London
    1964: Claude Lévi-Strauss, The Savage Mind. op. cit. 217-244.

38. ibid. p. 236. cf. Mircea Eliade. passim.

39. Will Wright, Sixguns and Society. op. cit. p. 212.

40. Salvador Giner and Roger Silverstone, Innovation, Communion and
    Domination. op. cit.

41. Mythologies. op. cit. p. 151.

42. ibid. p. 155.

43. Recent Marxist writing has restressed these connections, see for
    example: Nicholas Garnham, Contribution to a Political Economy of
    Mass Communication, Media, Culture and Society. Vol. 1. No. 2.
    April 1979. 123-146; Peter Golding and Graham Murdock, Ideology
    and the Mass Media: The Question of Determination, in Michelle
    Barrett et. al. (Eds.), op. cit. 198-225; idem. For a Political
    Economy of Mass Communication, Socialist Register. 1973. London.
    1974.

44. see Dennis McQuail, op. cit. p. 8. and Chapter 2.; George Gerbner,
    Communication and Social Development. Scientific American. 227.
    153-160; Alan Blum, Popular Culture and the Image of Gesellschaft.
    Studies in Public Communication. 1961. Vol. 3. 145-155.

45. cf. Marcel Mauss, The Gift. London 1969.; Claude Lévi-Strauss,
    The Elementary Structure of Kinship. London. 1969.; idem. The
    Bear and the Barber. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute.
    Vol. 93. Part 1. June. 1963. 1-11; and C.R. Badcock, Lévi-Strauss.
    op. cit.

46. cf. Pierre Bourdieu, Outline of a Theory of Practice. op. cit. and his note on the 'habitus' p. 85: "The habitus is the product of the work of inculcation and appropriation necessary in order for those products of collective history, the objective structures (e.g. of language, economy etc.) to succeed in reproducing themselves more completely, in the form of durable dispositions, in the organisms (which one can, if one wishes, call individuals) lastingly subjected to the same conditionings, and hence placed in the same material conditions of existence."; see also Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman, The Social Construction of Reality. op. cit. I don't believe that this 'reproduction' is simple, nor is it unequivocal.

47. James Curran, Michael Gurevitch, Janet Woolacott, Mass Communication and Society. London. 1977. p. 4.

48. A.L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn. op. cit. p. 181: "Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements for further action." 184. "But culture is not behaviour...Part of culture consists in norms for or standards of behaviour. Still another part consists in ideologies justifying or rationalising certain selected ways of behaviour."; see also George Lichtheim, The Concept of Ideology. History and Theory. 4. 1964. 164-195; Martin Seliger, The Marxist Conception of Ideology. London. 1977; John Plamenatz, Ideology. London ·. 1971.

49. Talcott Parsons, Societies. Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives. New Jersey. 1966.

50. A.L. Kroeber, The Nature of Culture. Chicago. 1957.

51. Claude Lévi-Strauss, Totemism. Harmondsworth. 1969 and passim.

52. Zigmunt Baumann, Culture as Praxis. London. 1973.

53. Marshall Sahlins, Culture and Practical Reason. op. cit.

54. Hans Barth, Truth and Ideology. Berkeley . 1976.

55. Stuart Hall, op. cit. 342.; idem. The Hinterland of Science: Ideology and the Sociology of Knowledge. Working Papers in Cultural Studies. 10. 1977. 9-32.

56. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology. op. cit. 41: "If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside down as in a camera obscura, this phenomenon arises as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina from their physical life-process."

57. Louis Althusser, Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus, in Lenin and Philosophy. London. 1971; see also Paul Q. Hirst, Althusser and the Theory of Ideology. Economy and Society. Vol. 5. No. 4. 1976.

58. Stuart Hall, op. cit.; cf. Rosalind Coward, Class Culture and the Social Formation. Screen. Spring. 1977. Vol. 18. 1. 75-105.

59. Clifford Geertz, op. cit. p. 212: "It is not truth that varies with social, psychological and cultural contexts but the symbols we construct in our uniquely effective attempts to grasp it."; cf. A.L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn. op. cit. p. 174 ff.

60. Such a bland assertion of course masks most of the current episte- mological problems in and around the sociology of knowledge. Karl Mannheim's relationism was a bold attempt to face just such a problem. see Ideology and Utopia. London. 1972. cf. Derek L. Phillips, Epistemology and the Sociology of Knowledge. Theory and Society. 1. 1974. 59-88.

61. Louis Althusser. op. cit. 151.

62. on the problems associated with simple reduction see Raymond Williams, Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory. New Left Review. 82. Dec. 1973. 3-16.

63. Karl Popper, Objective Knowledge. Oxford. 1972.

64. For a review of theories of mass culture see Salvador Giner, Mass Society. London. 1976. esp. Chapter 9. The distinction between professional, applied and amateur is argued by Thelma McCormack, Folk Culture and the Mass Media. op. cit.; cf. also Edward Shils, Tradition, in Centre and Periphery. Essays in Macrosociology. Chicago. 1975. 182-218.; idem., Mass Society and its Culture, in N. Jacobs (Ed.), op. cit. 1-27.

65. cf. Talcott Parsons, The Social System. New York and London. 1951. and Nicos Poulantzas, Political and Social Classes. London. 1973. esp. 206 ff.

66. Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks. op. cit.

67. Gwyn A. Williams, The Concept of 'Egemonia' in the Thought of Antonio Gramsci. Journal of the History of Ideas. 1960. 21. No. 4. 586-599. p. 587.; cf. Stuart Hall, Bob Lumley, Gregor McLennan, Politics and Ideology: Gramsci. Working Papers in Cultural Studies. 10. 45-76; James Joll. Gramsci. London. 1977 esp. 88-104.

68. Louis Althusser, Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses. op. cit.

69. Max Weber, quoted by Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, From Max Weber. Essays in Sociology. London. 1970. p. 47.

70. Stuart Hall, op. cit.

71. cf. Stuart Hall, Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse. op. cit.; Frank Parkin, Class Inequality and the Political Order. London. 1972, esp. p. 81 where he distinguishes between dominant, subordinate and radical value systems.

72. see especially. Jurgen Habermas, Legitimation Crisis. London. 1976, and Daniel Bell, op. cit.

Appendix 1

Analysis of Episode 6 of Intimate Strangers in terms of Christian Metz's
"Grande Syntagmatique"

TIME (minutes and seconds)

00.00	00.30	CREDITS
00.30		1. Sequence
		Early morning. Joan and Harry. Continuity of action;
		immediately before and after the act of eating breakfast.
	02.35	(Not entirely unproblematical: conceivably two scenes.)
02.35		2. Scene
		Harry's arrival at work: a continuous action, despite
		Harry's disappearance from the image, and continuous in
		time: his reappearance is anticipated. A separation in
		space (inside/outside) but the continuity of time and action
	04.57	indicates a scene.
04.57		3. Alternating Syntagm (2: Telephone)'(1)
		The conversation between Joan and Kenyon: uneven but distinct.
		The slight extension of attention to Joan at the end does
		not disqualify the categorisation or indicate a separate
	06.30	segment.
06.30		4. Scene
	07.40	Harry and Foster at work.
07.40		5. Scene
	10.57	Harry and Joan at dinner.
10.57		6. Scene
	12.44	Harry and Joan in the bedroom.
12.44		7. Alternating Syntagm (1: Chase)
		Joan at home. Harry and Kenyon discuss the plans.
		The link is a comparative one. While there is only one
		alternation, the juxtaposition of Joan (minimum action/natural) (2)
		and Harry (maximum action/cultural) suggests we should take
	14.24	this as one segment.
14.24		8. Scene
	15.22	Kate and Joan.
15.22		9. Connected Syntagm (Scene 2) (3)
		Harry's drive and minor accident. Cut to Joan and Kate
		awaiting him inside the house. Harry enters and new
		(inter-) action develops: but separation and linking action
	19.44	and space (inside/outside).

END OF PART ONE

19.44   10. Connected Syntagm (Scene 2)

Joan in garden: finishes work. Comes inside and meets
Kate and Harry. Again continuity of time, but linked
21.10   separation of action and space.

21.10   11. Scene

Joan at Church. More than one shot. Clearly a
21.57   separate segment.

21.57   12. Connected Syntagm (Scene 2)

Harry and Kate begin their row. Joan arrives outside the
house. Stops and listens. Back inside for Joan's entrance.
This is a borderline Scene/Connected Syntagm - the dependence
is on the significance of Joan's arrival as a separate action
24.54   (and indeed separate place: outside/inside again).

24.54   13. Descriptive Syntagm

Narratively both time and action are insignificant, though
clearly not exorcised completely. Possibly Parallel -
depending precisely on a subjective determination of the
passage of time. She looks up at the window: cut to
25.09   Harry asleep. An indication of simultaneity.

25.09   14. Scene
25.45   Joan and Harry and Kate in the Kitchen.

25.45   15. Scene
27.07   Harry and Foster and Kenyon. The deal is agreed.

27.07   16. Scene
27.21   Dale, the apprentice, makes his plan.

27.21   17. Scene
27.33   Harry, Kenyon and Foster sign.

27.33   18 Connected Syntagm (Scene 2)

The explosion in the car: Kenyon and Harry rush to the
exhaust. Foster joins them. Harry runs inside. Hand-held
eye-view shot. Harry attacks Dale. Clearly a difficult
segment to place. Linked but separate actions and places.
28.26   Almost certainly a continuity of time.

28.26   19. Scene
37.17   Joan and Harry have it out.

END OF PART TWO

360-

37.17   20. Sequence

                    Harry wakes up alone.   Sees the empty bed.   Cut to

                    Joan walking alone in the garden: Harry appears,

                    dressed, behind her.   Then continuity of time, space

                    and action.   Basically continuity of action but a

       46.52   break in time.

46.52   21. Scene

       47.57   Harry, Joan and Kate discuss the plans.

47.57   22. Episodic Sequence

                    A series of related but uncompleted actions

       49.05   summarisable under the heading 'Past'.

49.05   23. Scene

                    Harry and Joan in the garden.   The break from

                    22 is indicated by their coming together, and

       51.53   their subsequent interaction.   End Credits.

Footnotes:

       (1)   In two cases, this being one, it was found empirically necessary

              to refine the Metzian classification.   Here, two different types

              of alternation are recognised, the one exemplified by the telephone

              conversation, the other, the alternation described by Metz,

              exemplified by the chase.   Very simply what distinguishes them

              is their different quality of time and action: in the one, the

              telephone conversation, time is sequential during the action and

              actions within the alternation are linked but separate; in the

              chase there is a clear indication of simultaneity of time - the

              police car and the getaway car are moving closer together - while

              the action is cumulative; it is likely that the two will meet.

       (2)   The natural/cultural distinction is not one that intrudes or should

              intrude at this level of analysis; it is drawn upon here simply in

              order to specify or reinforce the nature of the contrast and the

              unity of the segment.

Footnotes (continued)

(3)   The second refinement occurs in the gap between the scene and the
sequence.   Here, using similar criteria of space, time and action,
one can distinguish the connected syntagm from the scene.   The
latter defines a simple unity of space, time and action;   the
connected syntagm defines an autonomous segment in which a
continuity of time holds together two spatially separate but
linked actions.   The paradigm is an articulation of inside/
outside actions.

Appendix 2 Vladimir Propp's Narrative Functions

(Abridged from Morphology of the Folktale pp. 149-155)

Preparatory Section

α	initial situation.
β	absentation.
γ	interdiction.
δ	violation.
ϵ	reconnaissance.
ζ	information received.
η	deceit.
θ	submission to deceit.
A	Villainy.
a	Lack/insufficiency.
B	Mediation, the connective incident.
B^2	dispatch.
B^3	release: departure.
B^4	announcement of misfortune.
C	Consent to counteraction.
↑	Departure: dispatch of the hero from home.
D	The first function of the donor.
E	Reaction of the hero.
F	The acquisition of, receipt of, a magical agent.
G	Transference to a designated place, guidance.
H	The hero struggles with the villain.
I	Victory over the villain.
J	Branding or marking the hero.
K	The liquidation of misfortune or lack.
↓	Return of the hero
Pr	Pursuit of the hero.
Rs	Rescue of the hero.
o	Unrecognized arrival.
L	Claims of a false hero.
M	Difficult task
N	Solution (resolution) of the difficult task.
Q	Recognition of the hero
Ex	Exposure of the false hero.
T	Transfiguration.

U	Punishment of the false hero or villain.
W	Wedding and accession to the throne.
ξ	connectives.

The 31 functions exclude α and ξ and count A and a as one. Apart from B, which is a diffuse category, all functions have been noted only by their main headings in the Morphology of the Folktale. These are the classif- ications which accord Propp's analysis its generality; within each of these individual functions there may be as many as 19 variations which, of course, will be significantly more specific to the Russian folktakes Propp used for his analysis.

Appendix 3. A.J. Greimas' Structural Model of the Narrative

(from Semantique Structurale p. 203)

<u>Propp's functions</u>

	Symbol	Propp's functions	Description	
	$\bar{P}$	β?	Departure: it is not clear of whom	*1
Rupture of Order and Alienation	$\bar{A}$	γδ	The contract broken.	
	$\bar{C}_1$	εζ	Knowledge (recognition) denied.	
	$\bar{C}_2$	ηθ	Power denied.	
	$\bar{C}_3$	, Aa	Object denied. (Lack) (Villainy).	
	p	?	Arrival	*2
	A_1	BC	Agreement to act: a new contract.	
	$\bar{P}$	↑	Departure of the hero	*1
	A_2 F_2 non c_2	⎰ DE ⎱ F	<u>The Qualifying test</u>: A_2: contract. F_2 combat. non c_2 result (help: power).	*3
Search	d non p_1	G	Rapid journey: the arrival of the hero at the place of combat.	
	F_1 c_1 non c_3	H.I J K	<u>The Main Test</u>: the contract already entered into (A_1 above). F_1: combat c_1 branding (potential recognition) non c_3: receipt of object.	*4
New search	non p_1 d F_1 P_1	↓ Pr/Rs	Rapid return and pursuit	*5
	A_3 F_3 non c_1	M N Q	<u>The Glorifying Test</u>: A_3: contract F_3: combat: non c_1 recognition.	*6
Reintegration and	C_2	T. (ex)	Power regained (transformation)	
ration and	C_3	W. (U.)	Object regained (wedding).	
Restoration of Order	A non c_3	B.C. K	A new contract (with society) established and lack liquidated.	

Footnotes to Appendix 3

This table belies the very real difficulty of making the two sets of functions correlate. Some of the problems are discussed by A.J. Greimas himself: others result from his insufficient or ambiguous consideration.

*1. Propp's β involves the absenting of the elders. It is one of the preparatory functions which are by no means mandatory to the narrative. It is not clear why Greimas should accept an opening journey here, except to balance the p structure. But since this function is repeated, its significance, structurally, is not clear.

*2. There is no equivalent function in Propp's morphology.

*3. As Greimas notes (Semantique Structurale 1970), Propp's treatment of the three tests is uneven. Strictly there is no function in this test for the equivalent of Greimas' F (affrontement/réussite) Propp talks of D (the first function of the donor) and E (the reaction of the hero). These two functions are assimilated into A, the contract in Greimas' formulation.

*4. Here the contract A_1 clearly has been established. The main test consists in the contract and victory (F_1 = H.I.), and resolution - liquidation of the lack (non c_3 = K).

*5. F_1 an unexplained function.

*6. Similar to *3 above. In Greimas' view: 1. Propp only identifies half of his function A., failing to recognize the response of the hero to the setting of the task (M), and 2. Propp identifies only half of function F_3, ignoring the combat and identifying only the success. (N).

Appendix 4. Series Morphology (following Vladimir Propp)

1. α   the initial situation: Joan and Harry established.

    γ   the implicit violation of a prohibition.   Harry's 'failure'

    δ   revealed as a result of his heart attack.

    a   The heart attack.

2. B   Information about Harry's recovery and its implications.

    C   Harry's consent to counteract.

    D }   Harry with Bob, and to a lesser extent Joan,
    E }   as potential helper/opposers.

    ↑   Harry's journey to the city.

    F-   His failure.

    ↓   His return.

    (K-)   His lack of a job (cultural health) reaffirmed.

3. (C)   Harry and Joan together agree to act to find social and physical health

    ↑   Their journey to the Lake District.

    D }   Involved with the Lansons,Ruskin, the Church,
    E }   the ghost of Peter, of Donald Campbell etc. and
    F }   with each other as potential helpers/opposers

    (K)   Their lack of relationship, Harry's lack of job.

    ↓   Their return.

4. C   Harry's task: to find a job.

    ↑   His departure to the City.

    D }   His involvement with various potential helpers/opposers
    E }   (the publisher, the printer, the banker, Joan)
    F-}   in his search for employment.

    ↓   His return home.....

    (K-)   empty handed.

                    need)
5. (C)   Harry's desire) to do his job well.

    ↑   His departure from home to work.

    D }   Pat, as the potential helper/opposer, and his
    E }   failure to find help outside the marriage.
    F-}

    (K-)   His lack of cultural and social health restated.

    (↓)   An implicit return.

(Episodes 2-5 manifest, at their most simple but also their most
basic, a similar morphology and function in the series
as a whole).

6. (A/a)   The lack of a good job, and Foster's threats.

    C   Harry's need to do well is reluctantly accepted.

    ↑   His departure from home.

    D)(H   His involvement with Kenyon   and potential

    E) I)   helpers/opposers: his involvement with Foster as

    F)   a neo-villain.   Successful.

    K+   Lack liquidated.   Contract achieved   .   Job secured.

    M   His involvement with the apprentice Dale, and

    N   his failure to achieve final recognition.   Harry is

    Q-   beaten and his job has gone.

    ↓   His return home.

    U   As false-hero, he is punished.

    W-   As failed hero, his marriage is threatened.

           A new initial situation.   A second narrative begins.

7.   B   Information about the project.

    C   Harry's acceptance of the task.

    ↑   Movement of home.

    B   Information about Joan's lack, her house and her garden.

    (C)   Joan's begrudging acceptance of the problem.

    D   Joan (and Harry's) involvement with her friends, the

    E   potential buyer of the house, Bob,as potential helper/

    F-   opposer .   All fail.

    (K-)   The lack, principally Joan's, remains.

    ↓

8.   B   Harry despatches Joan to the city.

    C   Joan agrees to go.

    ↑   She goes.

    D   Her involvement with Lionel as potential helper/

    E   opposer (actual seducer).   An ambiguous result.

    F ±

    ↓   Her return home.

    K-   The lack remains.

    (o)   Joan is unrecognized: her involvements unannounced.

9.   B   Harry dispatches Joan to the doctor.

     C   She consents to go.

     ↑   She goes.

     D ⎫   The doctor gives advice.

     E ⎬(H) Joan accepts the advice and as a result...

     F ⎭(I) She gains some confidence: reinforced by her

             involvement with Harry's young friends.

     ↓   She returns home.

     K   The lack in the relationship liquidated.

    (W)   Intimations of the "wedding" in their love-making.

10. ↑   Harry and Joan's departure and return from London to

     ↓   buy a double bed.

     M ⎫   Their testing as family leaders by Matt and Judith.

     N ⎭

     Q   This success and the recognition of it.

11. ↑   Harry and Joan's departure to Portsmouth.

     M ⎫   Joan's involvement with the sale and their joint involvement

     N ⎬   with the old sailor. Each, although differently, leads to...

     Q ⎭   their recognition of their own success and achievement.

     ↓   Their return home.

12. ↑   Harry's departure to the City.

     M ⎫   His involvement with the tycoon, with Bob, but

     N ⎭   above all with the P.R. lady.

     ↓   His return.

     Q   Their mutual recognition.

13. (Q)   The implicit restatement of their success.

    (U)   The 'punishment' of the "villain", Bob.

     T   Their transformation: in clothes, in spirit.

     W   The anniversary party (wedding) and their new house.

Appendix 5

Series: Structure (following Greimas)

$\bar{A}$ — The negative statement of the initial situation: the implicit breaking of a contract (essentially but not exclusively with each other).

$\bar{C}_3$ — The lack: loss of health.

$(\bar{C}_1)$ — Loss of identity and of confidence (self-knowledge)

$(\bar{C}_2)$ — Loss of power, ability to act.

A_1 — Harry's consent to act.

A_2 — His involvements with various helpers/

F_2 — opposers. } The qualifying tests.

non c_2 - — His failures.

non $c_2(+)$ — His own, momentary success (Episode 6) }

F_1 — His job success. } Main

non c_3 — The redemption of lack as a result: contract, job test.

A_3 — The involvement with apprentice Dale

F_3 — His reaction. } Glorifying Test

non c_1 - — His failure to achieve the confirmation of his heroic status.

$\bar{C}_1$ — The general failure re-established. $\bar{C}_1$ the non recognition

$C_2^{\to} \to C_2$ } $\bar{A}$ — of his heroic status (Harry as anti-hero); $C_2^{\to} \to \bar{C}_2$ His

$C_3^{-} \to C_3$ — failure to act becomes his powerlessness; $C_3^{-} \to \bar{C}_3$ His failure at work reaffirms and over determines his total failure as a man.

A_1 — Harry and Joan begin again.

A_2 — Harry and Joan are involved in their various } Qualifying

F_2 — encounters with helpers/opposers. } Tests.

non c_2 — Their final success in gaining the right help/advice.

(F_1) — The success in their relationship. } Main

non c_3 — The fruits of that success. } Test.

(C_1) — Their mutual recognition: a success: rediscovery of each other.

A_3 — Their various tests, both jointly and separately } Glorifying

F_3 — which establish and confirm their heroic status } Tests

non c_1 — That recognition of heroic status }

C_2 — Their transfiguration/transformation.

C_3 — Marriage and Building.

A_1 — The new contract.

Appendix 6

Analysis of the Morphology of Episode 6 using

the categories of Vladimir Propp

1. $\delta\gamma$ DEF (-)/a The opening sequence. Harry's surreptitious
early morning drink is already a violation, δ,
of a warning, γ, implicit in Joan's look. Joan's
offer of breakfast and lunch, D, is rejected, and
this rejection, E, involves a denial of Joan's
support and/or understanding, F-. This 'DEF'
sequence of testing, of which there will be
many examples, does in this case as a whole
indicate the nature of the lack, a, of relation-
ship. Its identification here in fact demands
knowledge of the series, knowledge which makes
it more explicit than it otherwise would be.

2. $B^4\zeta aC$ This segment is concerned above all with
Harry's lack of work, a. His response to the
idle works, to open his letters, to ring the
bursar and to take a drink, is indicated by C,
consent to counteraction. The main problem
concerns the identity of B^4 and of ζ, both of
which refer to the provision of information, the
former of information about the lack (lack of
noise indicating lack of work); the latter of
information about a villain. While, given the
alternatives provided by Propp, the labelling
is less arbitrary than it might be, in general
the introduction of information into the narra-
tive is not well handled. Indeed this is of
some significance for contemporary narratives
which seem to rely, in their complexity, on the
transmission of information of one sort or
another as a fundamental part of the story-
telling. The second problem concerns the
presence of the villain. In Intimate Strangers
a villain as such rarely appears, though
functions which, according to Propp, demand the
presence of one are clearly identifiable. In
this case the villain is Foster.

3. ζ

A segment involved in the provision of information. Kenyon tells Joan that he might have work for Harry (the is relevant to a:work) but also sows seeds of doubt in Joan's mind about Harry's recent trip to London (a:relationship).

4. $(\delta)B^2C$ ξ

(δ) indicates the continuing violation of the warning not to drink. Foster now reveals himself as a functionally complex figure: in one sense it is clear that here he acts as a dispatcher, defining the task for Harry and supporting that definition with threats (hence Propp's B^2), but maintains his position as at least an implicit villain, precisely because he has it in his power to thwart Harry's progress (by giving him the sack). C indicates Harry's consent to counteraction and indicates a more or less catch-all category (also concerned with the transmission of information) which Propp calls a connective - in this case the ringing of the phone and Harry's recognition of Kenyon's voice.

5. $(\delta)DE_{(F+/-)}$
    $DE^{(F+/-)}$

(δ) drink. Two tests are involved here, both of which are incomplete. The first is the alienating test, basically a repetition of the one in 1; the other is Harry's subterfuge over his trip to London. Joan is upset but her denial of support and/or her acceptance of Harry's story is still left open (to 6). (F+/-) indicates therefore an incomplete but complex conclusion. (Strictly F has to do with the provision or denial of a magical agent. Clearly in this context it is legitimate to demystify it slightly. We are concerned with the provision or denial of help with regard to the liquidation of the initial lack.)

6. F/E(εζ,)F-/A(a)   A difficult and complex scene involving deception
                      and the receipt of information.   Joan comes close
                      to villainy: F/E indicates Joan's response to
                      Harry's drunkenness; her provision of help, E, is
                      at the same time her reaction, F, to the challenge
                      of Harry's lie.   (εζ) indicates the nature of this
                      response, i.e. E(εζ), reconnaissance and receipt
                      of information.   F-/ indicates her negative reaction
                      and the implicit denial of support for Harry (a).
                      So, in all, this segment is both a summary and a
                      clear statement of the lack in their relationship
                      (a) overdetermined, as it were, by Harry's past
                      villainy and Joan's present villainy, A.

7. (F-) DE   Joan is alone in the garden.   Her solitude is to
                      be seen as a reaffirmation of her implicit denial
                      of Harry in 6, as well as a general statement about
                      the lack of relationship.   DE indicates Kenyon's
                      promise of a contract which is his first function
                      as a donor: Harry responds, E.   The conclusion
                      remains to be stated.   Hence, even in a 'static'
                      Proppian analysis we can recognise in the DE→F
                      sequence the dynamic possibility DE, definition (F)
                      and the necessity of this interrelation.   There is a
                      sense in which D and E need to be completed (see
                      below) and it is this necessity which provides one
                      aspect of the dynamic in the narrative.

8. Dζ   Joan and Kate: D indicates Kate's first function
                      as donor (of a drink specifically), and we are
                      aware, as she becomes aware, of the equivocality of
                      the gift;ζ : Joan provides Kate with the information
                      (and reminds us of the implications of Harry's situation).

9. ₷ EFDEF (not+   Harry's altercation with the wheelbarrow is heavily
         not-)   symbolic, but otherwise narratively neutral.   It
                    provides in addition specific information about
                    Harry's drunken state.   The first EF indicates
                    Harry's generally positive response to Kate's
                    bottle, and the fragile interaction, F, which results.
                    The second DEF (not+/not-) involves Harry's and
                    Kate's confrontation over her income, F (not+/not-)
                    suggests a central and open result that there is
                    more to come, in other words that the offer/acceptance
                    of the magical agent (support/understanding) is
                    still held in abeyance.

                    END OF PART ONE

10. ₷   The suspense with regard to the resolution of the
                    test in 9, maintained by a narratively neutral
                    segment, providing only very general information:
                    it is Sunday, Joan works separately and goes to
                    church separately, Kate and Harry, the contestants
                    in unfinished business, remain.

11. ₷   Re-emphasis of Joan's separation.

12. DEF(-)   A complex segment; the DEF test involves Harry and
                    Kate, the final negativity of F(-) being reinforced
                    by Joan's appearance and involvement.   Strictly
                    both Harry and Kate act as separate donors: Harry
                    of information, accepted by Kate as helpful in the
                    pursuit of her particular tasks; and this in turn
                    leads to the providing of information (about her
                    relationship with Bob) which Harry finds objectionable.
                    In both cases then, the first function of the donor is
                    the provision of information.   The end result is the
                    denial of support for Harry, and his increasing
                    isolation - he is getting further away and further
                    away, it would seem, from the liquidation of lack
                    (a: relationship) and the denial of help by Kate
                    only adds another dimension (see 14).

13.   (a)   A connecting segment emphasising lack of

relationships (a: relationship).

14.   (D)EF   This concerns the neutralisation of 12, but of a

limited kind. Harry apologises and has Kate's

support in his pursuit of lack (a: work), but it

is not a major event for the narrative, and Kate

remains a fairly equivocal helper. (D): Harry's

apology; E: Kate's friendly response; F: support

for Harry: a 'magical agent' to take with him on

his search.

15.   (δ)F/H   F in relation to DE in segment 7 above. H indicates

the struggle with the villain - the beginning of the

main test with reference to the lack, a: work.

A multi-functionality is involved. Kenyon agrees

to the deal, F, and in so doing offers Harry the

key to the eradication of the threat of the sack.

It becomes part of the main test and the struggle

with the villain because Foster is now all that

separates him from achieving the fulfilment of the

task. (δ) once again refers to the drinking

prohibition.

16. B^4 Dale's announcement of his yet unspecified villainy.

(Dale is Foster's apprentice - villainy at one remove

indicates perhaps a recognition of the problem of

villain/dispatcher.)

17   IK   The liquidation, apparently, of the lack, K, by

virtue of Harry's victory, I, over the villain.

18   MN-/Q-U-/a   Propp indicates that in the narrative there

usually follows a further test, once the main test

(with reference to the stated lack) has been completed.

This test involves the hero once again, and involves,

often, the necessity to prove his rightful title to

the object of the search. It is possible, though

Propp does not indicate the possibility, that the hero can fail in this test. Here Harry fails. M, the difficult task (how to deal with the explosion). N(-), Harry's negative resolution (he attacks the apprentice). MN implicate Q(-) the (non)-recognition of the hero and U(-) the (non)-punishment of the false hero or villain. Harry goes unrecognised and he is punished as though he were a villain - by the very punishment which negates the previous success: his lack (of work) is reaffirmed.

19. §
DE(-)F(-)/
HI(-)/
K(-)/
Q(-)/
W(-)/

The major scene of the episode and the series. Its analysis depends partially on its place in the series which makes the categorisation suggested fairly safe. As a result of the negativity of 18, Harry returns home. He reports (§) what happened. What follows is a final (qualifying) test for Harry from Joan - the test which has as its source his trip to London. This test fails; Harry responds negatively; they are still separated; no magic. DE(-)F(-); this test however is magnified in its narrative significance. The failure, F(-), explains what is at stake (ie the lack - a:relationship). H and I indicates the intensity of the struggle, the main test with regard to lack though without a clearly defined villain (is it Harry? Is it Joan, is it circumstance?). As a result the lack is unliquidated, K(-). Harry is unrecognised, Q(-) and the wedding which should follow a successful outcome is transferred to its near opposite, W(-), the threat of a split - in other words a re-emphasis of the initial lack (a: relationship). We can follow Propp here, in identifying the end of a move, which by virtue of its negativity indicates that a new move is to follow.

END OF PART TWO

20   αβεζ aBC   If, as seems reasonable, the final function in
19 is W(-), then the first part of the series'
narrative is complete, and indeed within the
episode itself there is a clear break.   There is
no clear break like this in any other episode,
and for this structural reason, as well as more
obvious ones to do with context, Episode Six is
seen to be pivotal.   announces a new situation,
and a new move.   In the early explanation
and discussion of the situation the following
preparatory functions can be identified: β
absentation (of Joan); ε reconnaissance (by Harry
to find Joan); ζ information received by Harry
about Joan (and vice-versa).   What follows is
the statement of the problem: the lack (a: rela-
tionship);   its discussion B (what Propp calls
the mediating incident);   and C their joint
consent to counteraction.

21   DEF   Harry and Joan test Kate, in search of support.
They get it.

22   ℰ   This episodic sequence serves a basically
connective function - memories, the past
symbolised (incidentally an example of a complex
signifier with a simple signified).

23   ℰ   A further connective - this time looking, with
trepidation, to the future.
END

Appendix 7

Analysis of the Structure of Episode 6 using the categories of A.J. Greimas

$\bar{A}$

The drink. Symbolic of, and essentially a summary of Harry's relations with the world. Also a specific violation of a specific prohibition.

$\left.\begin{array}{l} A_2 \\ F_2 \\ \text{non } C_2(-) \end{array}\right\} \overline{(C_3)}$

The failure in the relationship. Harry is denied the power to affect his circumstances. He remains without support.

(C_3 - the lack of relationship.)

$\overline{(P_1)}$ Departure.

$\overline{C_1}$ At work. The reconnaissance and receipt of information.

$\overline{C_3}$ Announcement of lack/villainy.

A_1 The acceptance of the challenge by Harry (A_1) - not yet a new contract, strictly.

$\left.\begin{array}{l} A_2 \\ F_2 \\ \text{non } c_2(-) \end{array}\right\} \begin{array}{l} \overline{(C_1} \\ \overline{C_2}(?) \\ \overline{C_3} \end{array}$

A question of double functionality. $A_2 F_2$ non c_2 indicates a repetition of the first qualifying test, with the same result. That and the diary incident imply that Joan, momentarily, plays the villain. In other words, the link, recognised equally in the Proppian analysis, of reconnaissance, deceit and villainy.

$A_2 F_2$ non c_2

Kenyon. A successful encounter. It is through Kenyon's intercession that Harry is given the power to transform his position.

$A_2 F_2$ non $c_2(+/-)$

Kate's complex, but ultimately neutral involvement in what is only another qualifying test.

F_1 non c_3

Combat and victory: the liquidation of the lack. The contract for the printing has been signed, but ...

A_3
$F_3(-)$
non $c_1(-)$
non $c_3(-)$

The glorifying test: to establish the hero's rightful title. Harry fails it. He is not recognised (he becomes momentarily the villain) - and with the result (non $c_3(-)$) the lack is reinstated (no work - no relationship).

P_1

He arrives home (in the dark).

F_1
non $c_3(-)$
A_2
F_2
non $c_2(-)$

The hero is unrecognised. The double functionality again. Joan and Harry's first confrontation is in the nature of both the last qualifying test (the generation of power in the relationship) and also a second main test, associated with the lack of relationship. The A associated with this lack is implicit (i.e. he has not stated his willingness to undertake the reparation of the relationship). It is assumed that he wants to.

$c_1(-)$ (?)

The branding: 'the failure' not removed.

$c_2(-)$

His revelation as a non-hero (without power).

$c_3(-)$

His 'negative' marriage: his punishment.

non $c_3(-)$

The lack not liquidated.

$\overline{A}/\overline{C}_3$

The violation of all the norms of responsible manhood. We have now reached a new reaffirmation of an initial situation of alienation (a social heart attack).

$\overline{P}$

Next morning: Harry's departure.

$\overline{C}_1$

He seeks out Joan: and they question each other (knowledge).

$\overline{C}_3$

They reveal the nature of the lack (goods/desire).

$\overline{C}_2$

They discover to some extent, the existence of their own inadequacy (power).

A_1 The contract presented.

$A_2 F_2$ non c_2 The first joint qualifying test for Kate.   Support
                        given.   They are encouraged to press ahead.

Appendix 8
Morphology of Episodes 1 - 13 (excluding 6)

Episode 1

A. Morphology

α		Joan and Harry at home (and at work).
↑		Harry's departure.
γ		Harry's delegation of the job to his junior at the
δ		office.
B_4/a		Announcement by lawyer of the loss of holiday home.
(C)		Harry's decision to find an alternative holiday.
D		Request for support for his plans from Joan.
E	(H)	A failure
F⌐		
D		Kate's help; more successful, though not immediately.
E		
F		
D	H	Joan's involvement: and the final acceptance of
E		the holiday plans
F	I	
K		Holiday agreed: lack liquidated.
B_4		Information from work that something is wrong.
G		Harry's rapid departure.
F		The failure of Harry's delegate.
H/M		A test for an object (the remedy of the potential
I/N		loss) and for a restatement of Harry's heroic position.
(K) (Q)$^{+}_{-}$		Neither are conclusive.
Pr.		The first journey to meet the train.
T⌐		The Heart Attack.
a (A)		Lack - villainy. A loss of health. Why?

B. Acting Units (Actants)

Hero:	Harry.
Help/Opponents:	Joan, Kate. Junior at work.
Villain:	?
Object of Search:	'holiday' : redemption of failure at work.

Episode 2

A. Morphology

		Harry is in hospital.
α ⎫		The doctor informs Joan about Harry's condition and
ζ ⎬ a		specifies the does and don'ts of recovery. The lack
γ ⎭		at this stage is his health.

B₃   Harry comes home.

C   His determination not to be considered an ivalid and
to recover quickly.

D ⎫
    The ambiguous and inconsistent help from the family.

E ⎬   Matt and Joan row about the seriousness of the affair.

F±⁺ ⎭

a   The lack of work discussed in the garden.

D ⎫   The company accountant, Bob, as helper. In

E ⎬H   his planning for Harry's return to work, he

F ⎭   villainously consults the doctor.

↑   Harry's departure to work.

H ⎫   Harry's failure at work : the job is a non-

I- ⎬   job. The lack of work remains.

K- ⎭

(↓)   His return.

o (Q -)   Unrecognised. He is not a hero. There is no
glorifying test.

B. Acting Units

Hero:	Harry.
Helper/Opponents:	The family (Joan, Kate, Judith and Matt). Bob.
Villain:	(Bob).
Object of Search:	Health (which becomes) Job.

Episode 3

    A. Morphology

α		Initial situation : on holiday.
β		Their (departure and) arrival.
γ		Jane's prohibition : she tells Harry not to lift the case,
δ	a	(lack of health) and they row about his eating cream cakes.
ε		Harry's walk through Coniston. He discovers the presence
ζ		of Ruskin.
B		The past exumed in the recollection of Peter, Joan's
		dead brother.
C		Harry's exercises: his acceptance of the need to do them,
		although equivocal.
D		The lack of health forgotten, or at least transformed
E		into a social health. A series of 'encounters'
F±		with 'memories of the past' : Ruskin, Peter (Joan's
		brother), Donald Campbell, Christ, etc.
D		The involvement with the Lansons: an encounter which
E		generates momentary closeness between Joan and
F±		Harry.
B (ηθ)		Information received by Harry about Joan's deception.
H		Joan becomes the villain momentarily as Harry
I		argues with her about the implications of his
K (-)		heart attack; the content is work and health; the
a		substance is their lack of relationship.
↓		They return home.

    B. Acting Units

Hero:	Harry: Harry and Joan.
Helper/Opposer:	The Lansons, Ruskin, Peter, Campbell, Christ.
Villain:	Joan.
Object of search:	'health', particularly social health.

Episode 4

    A. Morphology

α	At home.
ζ /a	Information (letter and Joan's conversation with Judith: lack of a job: lack of money.
D ⎫ E ⎬ F ⎭	the first of a series of encounters with potential helpers : this one is the Banker. The difficulty is averted.
D ⎫ E ⎬ F ⎭	The publisher, Mancroft. This leads to his meeting with Daniels.
D ⎫ H E ⎬ F ⎭ I	Daniels is helper but also since he holds the key to Harry's cultural success, a potential villain. This first encounter is therefore doubly functional. Moderate success leads to a second test.
↑	The journey to the City to see
M ⎫ N ⎭	The moneylender. Harry's failure to borrow the necessary capital.
↓	His return and meeting with Paul on the train.
K- ⎫ Q- ⎭	Lack liquidated. ⎫ Harry's double failure. Hero nonrecognised ⎬ Daniels calls off the deal.
(C)	His weak counteraction.

    B. Acting Units

Hero:	Harry.
Helper/Opponents:	Banker: Mancroft: Daniels: Moneylender.
Villain:	Daniels.
Object of search:	Cultural health, a job.

Episode 5

    A. Morphology

a.   The lack specified. Full understanding of it depends partly on previous acquaintance with the series.

P   despatched by Joan.

↑   Journey to work.

(a)   The lack of relationships at home (mirrored in the row of Judith and Matt).

D   The failure of the family to provide the

E   necessary support.

F-

B   Foster as despatcher but also as villain and therefore:

H   in the context of work, and the lack of orders, the

(1) I-   failure to produce work is a serious failure: Foster's

        opposition is fundamental.

D   Pat. Potentially supporter, but in her guise as seducer

E H(2) also a villain. Harry's involvement with her therefore

   I

F   doubly functional lack and qualifying but also a main test: the main test (1) and (2), two

K-   aspects of an overdetermined failure.

o   Harry returns home, momentarily, unrecognised, he leaves.

M   He finds Pat and she attacks him, and then

N   leaves herself.

Q

T-/Ex- Harry is left dejected.

    B. Acting Units (Actants)

Hero:	Harry.
Helper/Opponent:	the Family. Pat.
Villain:	Foster. Pat.
Dispatcher:	Joan. Foster.
Object of search:	Harry.

Episode 6

For fuller analysis see Appendix 6.

Episode 6

For fuller analysis see Appendix 6.

Episode 7

    A. Morphology

α	Harry and Joan at home.
ζ/a	Information about the lack and the possible plan.
β/(C)	Harry and Joan leave. Itself a consent to counteraction.
B	The first contact with Mrs Temple, owner of the bookshop. Information and planning.
D E F	Joan and Harry in their mutual testing about the sale of the house and the sale of the car.
D E F	Joan's confrontation (3 in all) with her friend Marilyn. Joan's activities predominate in the narrative: they are increasingly negative.
D E F	Harry successfully sells the car: money is gained towards the successful completion of the transaction of moving.
D E (H) F- (I)	The abortive sale of the house. Diana is potential helper - but in the failure suggests a serious threat to Joan's existence.
E F+	Harry's work is the shop but most significantly his attempt to get his pension early. It fails
↓	His return
H M	Harry and Joan's confrontation at the house.
I N K- Q-	Doubly functional: a serious test for Joan, but following the actual failure of the house sale, her identity is at stake. She fails both. His world is empty.
↓	They return

    B.   Acting Units (Actants)

Hero:	Joan: Harry
Helper/Opponent:	Mrs. Temple: the buyer of the car: the buyer of the house, Marilyn.
Villain:	(Harry).
Dispatcher:	Harry.
Object of search:	Money: a new life.

<u>Episode 8</u>

  A.   <u>Morphology</u>

  α   Harry and Joan at home.

  β/a   Harry's despatch of Joan reveals the lack.

  ↑/C   Her departure signals her consent to counteraction.

  K   The effective purchase of clothes. The immediate
                       lack redeemed without a struggle.
                       This simple move complete.

  ε ⎫   The meeting with Lionel. Information about each
  ζ ⎬   other transferred.
  η ⎬   Lionel's deceit and Joan's deception through lunch
  θ ⎭   and afterwards.

  A (a)   Villainy: Joan is seduced.

  D⎫   The subsequent incident with Lionel doubly
   ⎪H
  E⎬   functional. He is her helper, but also her opponent (as
   ⎪I
  F⎭   seducer.)

  K⁺   The result is ambiguous: she has found something of
                       herself, but at a price.

  ↓   Joan returns home.

  o   Unrecognized.

  M ⎫   Joan's failure to tell Harry what happened
  N ⎭   leads to

  Q-)   a denial of her status as hero (or even anti-hero).

  K(T-/Ex-)   The lack remains: she is punished and
                       untransformed.

  B.   <u>Acting Units</u>

  Hero: Joan.
  Helper/Opponent: Lionel.
  Villain (seducer):   Lionel.
  Dispatcher: Harry.
  Object of search: : Joan: Joan and Harry.

Episode 9

A. Morphology

α   Harry and Joan at home.

D ⎤   Joan's various tests: with Harry, with Marion, at the

E ⎬ a   Saleroom etc.   all amounting to a statement of her

F ⎦   lack, her failure.

B_2 That failure is recognized by Harry and leads to his

                dispatch of Joan.

D ⎤   The visit to the doctor: Joan receives help (of a

E ⎬(H)   sort) in her struggle with herself.

F ⎦

J   She goes to the hairdresser: a mark of potential/

                actual success/determination.

D ⎤   Her dinner with Harry; of similar functional

E ⎬(H)   significance to her involvement with the doctor.

F ⎦   Harry is helper: she struggles with herself.

D ⎤   The narrative develops: her meeting with the

E ⎬(H)(I) young people suggests her increasingly successful

F ⎦   struggle

H ⎱M   Harry and Joan together: the villain (Joan) from her test

I ⎰N   is the joint recognition of their heroic status.

K   The lack is the relationship liquidated.

Q   The mark recognized: though ironically in her nakedness,

T   a nakedness symbolic of her transformation.

W   They kiss.

B. Acting Units

Hero:	Joan
Helper/Opponent:	Harry. Doctor. Young people.
Villain:	Joan.
Dispatcher:	Harry.
Object of search:	Harry and Joan: Joan.

Episode 10

    A.   Morphology

(The morphology of Episode 10 is presented in two columns:
it reflects the conflict within the narrative and the clarity
with which two narrative threads are presented).

(c)		Joan and Harry decide to go to London and buy a bed.
	ζ /(a)	Information is received about Judith's and Matt's marriage and its tensions.
	D	Harry and Joan try and help,
	E a	but fail. The lack
	F-	defined.
	B_4/B_2	Information about Judith's pregnancy. Joan tells Judith to inform Matt.
$(\beta)\uparrow$		Joan and Harry go to London.
K		They buy their bed. They enjoy their time together: as heroes.
$\downarrow$	$\left.\begin{array}{l} D \\ E \\ F- \end{array}\right\}$	Judith consults her doctor about abortion. He refuses.
	$\left.\begin{array}{l} D \\ E \\ F \end{array}\right\}\begin{pmatrix}H\\I\end{pmatrix}$	Joan and Harry return to find Judith waiting with the news of their broken marriage. They successfully intercede.
	K	The lack (Judith and Matt's marriage) is decreased.
	W	Judith and Matt together again.

B. Acting Units (Actants)

Hero:	(Joan and Harry). Judith (and Matt).
Helper/Opponent:	Joan and Harry : (Judith and Matt).
Villain:	No-one clearly defined as such.
Object of search:	Marriage.

Episode 11

    A.   Morphology

↑ (β)	Harry and Joan leave for London and Remembrance Sunday.
ε ⎫ ζ ⎭	They remember their past together.
a(±)/B	Their lost past: their surplus of memories.
/ B/(C)	Harry suggests that Joan sells antiques.
⋛	They meet Harry's friends in the pub again.
↑	They go to the party.
D ⎫ E ⎬ F ⎭	The praise of their friends: and the mirror image of the arguing couple.
H	Joan's first encounter with the saleroom.
D ⎫ E ⎬ F+ ⎭	Joan and Harry's encounter with the old sailor: the past ressurected again. A slightly ambiguous encounter.
I	Joan buys her first antiques.
K	The lack: her confidence: her cultural identity redeemed.
Q	The praise of the boys who carry her purchases to the car, and of Harry. They return home.

    B.   Acting Units (Actants)

Hero:	Harry and Joan: Joan.
Helper/Opponent:	Their friends, the old sailor.
Villain:	None.
Dispatcher:	Harry.
Object of search:	Joan's cultural identity

Episode 12

    A.   Morphology

↑   The departure of Joan and Harry to see accountant.

ζ   They meet old colleague and obtain and receive

            information about Harry's old firm.

D⎫   Help, advice and information from the accountant.

E⎬ a   Harry's uncertain financial position revealed.

F⎭

⇓   Return home.

B   Information from Bob leading to

C   Harry's consent to counteraction.

            He goes to London.

D⎫   The involvement with Ramsey Bennett, and

E⎬H   the offer of a job: the first stage of his struggle

(F)⎭   with himself.

D⎫   The involvement with Anna (The P.R. lady)

 ⎬H

E⎬I   a similar struggle, though it develops beyond

F⎭   the initial interaction.

(J)   The perfume on his shirt.

K   His success: her denial of Anne is an assertion of

            his own completeness.

⇓   Return.

o   Initially unrecognized.

M⎫   The struggle, through Joan, with himself: (F) the

(F) N⎬   rejection of the job. His basic status manifest,

Q⎭   especially in his understanding of Joan's

            information about her liaison with Lionel.

W   They kiss.

    B.   Acting Units. (Actants)

Hero:	Harry.
Helper/Opponent:	Joan: the accountant: R.B. Anna.
Villain: (seducer)	Anna.
Object of search:	Harry: Joan and Harry.

Episode 13

   A.   Morphology

ζ Information received about Harry's serious illness.

B.C.   Harry and Joan agree to go and see what can be done.
(There is no distinct lack, rather a surplus to be defended... the
subsequent tests are weak narratively).

$\uparrow$ Their departure.

D ⎤
E ⎥ B_2 The test with the past, symbolised by Harry's
F ⎦   mother, and her death (β_2)

K   The burden of the past liquidated.

D ⎤   Harry's visit to the doctor; a warning but a
E ⎥ K
F ⎦   recognition of his health, (natural health).

D ⎤   Harry and Joan: Bob and Kate: (cultural health) working
E ⎥
        separately and together; the establishment of family life.
F ⎦ K   (Social health). The bungalow.

Q ⎤   Their joint recognition of their heroic status and their
T ⎥
        triumph. The bungalow and its planning. The
W ⎦   wedding.

B/C   The openness to the future.

   B.   Acting Units (Actants)

Hero: Harry and Joan.
Helper/Opponent: Harry's mother (part). Kate and Bob. "The family
Object of search: Harry and Joan.